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IT NEVER GROWS OLD.

A youth and a maiden low-talking:
He angery, she shrinking and shy:
A blush on her face as she listens,
And yet a soft tear in her eye.

Oh! sweet bloomed the red damask roses,
And sweet sang the thrush on the spray,
And bright was the glamor of sunshine
That made the world fair on that day.

But oh! not so sweet the red roses,
So sweet the bird's song from above,
So bright the gold glamor of sunshine,
As was the sweet glamor of love.

That fell on that pair in the garden,
As 'mid the fair flowers they strolled:
And there, as 'twas first told in Eden,
Again was Love's tender tale told.

NAMELESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE NEMESIS OF LOVE," "UNDER WILD SKIES," "ALONG THE LINE," "PENKIVEL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

PROLOGUE.

A SUMMER'S night in London, when the sun had long gone down, and the refreshing coolness of the midnight hours had succeeded the scorching noontide heat, (it was pleasant out-of-doors, though there was very little air and hardly enough wind to stir the leaves of the trees.

A great stillness seemed to have fallen on the earth; the theatres had emptied themselves of their patrons, the opera was over, most of the brilliant ball-rooms were deserted.

Even in the far-off East the spirit of slumber had hardly given place to daily toil, and here at the West pleasure had well nigh run its course; a great hush had settled upon the vast city, and the dawn of another day was yet an hour distant.

A man stood idly near the river—a man not far from forty years of age—with a handsome, earnest face, clearly cut, aristocratic features, marked with a strange sadness, as though for him life held little worth the living for.

Yet, people would have called him one of fortune's favorites—the heir of a grand old family, the possessor of a beautiful estate and princely income, a wife whose lovelliness was the theme of a hundred tongues. Surely his lot was fair enough!

Yet he stood by the waterside with a weight of sorrow on his brow; he was thinking of a dark chapter in his life, whose shadow could never quite pass away.

He was realizing bitterly that rank and wealth, admiring friends and loving wife, were not enough to fill one aching void, that he could have given up all for which men envied him if only one face might have been at his side.

He was still in evening dress, for he had but an hour quitted a brilliant ball; the diamond studs flashed in his shirt, a valuable signet ring was on his finger

Suddenly there came towards him a woman's figure, a shrinking, trembling form clad in rusty black, a creature on whom poverty and sorrow had left heavy traces.

Lost in his reverie, the solitary dreamer never noticed her approach until her poor dress was almost touching him; then as he started from the contact he looked up abruptly and saw her face.

"Rosalie!"

The word was almost wrung from him, an anguish too deep for utterance was at his heart.

The poor trembling waif shrunk away. In all the world she had most wronged this man; of all her fellow-creatures she had least claim on him.

"Rosalie!"

He laid one hand on her shoulder to prevent her escape.

There was no danger, no reproach in his voice. It was full of an intense sadness, and it touched her more than any harshness. She burst into tears.

She was young, still only twenty, and oh! how changed she was from the beautiful girl he remembered, whom he had last seen wearing his betrothal ring.

"Let me go!" she panted. "Oh! if you have any pity in your heart, let me go."

She pointed to the river.

"It is cool and still there; at least I should have rest," she murmured, "and I am so tired, so weary, life is so very hard, let me die."

"Why don't you go home to your mother?"

She laughed bitterly.

"My mother? She would order the footman to drive me from her door she would have no pity on me."

"My poor child," he said, "you shall suffer no longer. A brighter future is dawning for you, and I trust for me too. Come." And supporting her drooping form with his strong arm, the two figures quietly disappeared in the shadows.

* * * * * *

It was a bright August morning, the summer sunshine poured into the library at Trevlyn Court, and lighted up the handsome features of Sir Ronald Trevlyn, as he sat at his writing-table in earnest conversation with his lawyer.

A strikingly handsome man of seven or eight and twenty, with dark flashing eyes, luxuriant black hair, and a firm, determined expression.

The old man opposite looked at him with an anxious face.

Man and boy he had been faithful to the Trevlyns for over fifty years.

He had tried in vain to check the mad extravagance of Sir Ronald's father, and he had a kind of mingled awe and pity for the young heir who had come all unprepared into such an impoverished inheritance.

"Speak plainly," commanded the baronet, simply. "Trevlyn Court is mortgaged almost to its value; there are debts and difficulties on every side; in plain, simple English I am a ruined man."

The lawyer hesitated.

"Things are hardly so bad as that; with care and economy——"

"The Trevlyns are not a careful race," interrupted their descendant. "I couldn't bring myself to count sixpences; I had rather sell the old place at once."

"It would break your mother's heart."

Sir Ronald rose, and took an abrupt turn up and down the room; it he loved any one it was his mother, the proud, haughty lady whose very life was bound up in the happiness and prosperity of the Trevlyns.

"There is only one thing for it," said the lawyer, gaining courage. "You must marry. A wife's portion will at least free the Court, and then in a few years time you would be a rich man."

Sir Ronald brough. his clenched fist down on to the table.

"Turn fortune-hunter, eh?" he said, bitterly. "I wonder you dare to offer me such advice, Ward."

"A man may marry an heiress without any loss of honor, Sir Ronald; the last of the Trevlyns is no bad match, even as things are."

"A retired butterman for father-in-law! That would be paying a pretty price, almost too heavy a one even to save my home."

The other was silent, he knew his hint must have time to work, and, well satisfied with the beginning he had made, he followed his client into the spacious dining-room.

Lunch was already served, and Lady Trevlyn was in her place—a magnificent woman still, her beauty little impaired by her fifty years.

"Ronald," she said, after she had exchanged greetings with Mr. Ward, "I have great news for you. Lord Earl and his daughter have returned."

"Have they?" rather bitterly.

"Earlsmere has been shut up for more than eighteen years," said Lady Trevlyn, turning to Mr. Ward. "You must remember the place; it is the next estate to this, and very dreary it has been, having it unoccupied for all these years.

"I have often wondered how people could stay away from such a home," he replied.

"And the money that has been spent on it," said Lady Trevlyn, with a little sigh, showing, how economical she had had to be in her gardens and furniture. "I call it wilful waste; all these eighteen years Earlsmere has been kept in as perfect order as if though its master were daily expected."

"And now he has come."

"Without a word of notice. Lord Earl was always very eccentric, even as a young man."

"He had a right to please himself," said Sir Ronald, coldly. "Because a man chooses to live abroad he ought not to be pronounced mad."

"Is he married? If not, what an event his coming will be to county society," said Mr. Ward, innocently.

"He was widower of nearly sixty, with one only daughter," and Lady Trevlyn looked impressively at her son. "Lilian Earl will be one of the greatest heiresses in England some day."

Sir Ronald quite understood all that was implied.

He helped himself to some more wine before he said, coldly—

"I daresay she squints or has red hair."

"Ronald!"

"Why should you endow the young lady with such misfortunes?" asked the solicitor, gravely.

"Because her father has hidden her so diligently from public view," returned Sir Ronald. "She was born abroad, and no one has ever heard anything about her. Lord Earl has lived in the South of France ever since his wife's death, and no one has ever quite known where. All inquiries have been in vain; even my mother, who was the intimate friend of the late Lady Earl, has never heard anything of her daughter beyond the fact of her birth."

"I shall go and call upon her at once," decided Lady Trevlyn. "Poor girl, I daresay she feels strange and lonely in a home she has never seen. As her mother's friend, it is my duty to welcome her to Blackshire."

"And teach her manners," put in Sir Ronald, lightly; "she'll need it after eighteen years of wandering with only masculine companionship."

Lady Trevlyn deigned no reply. When she came downstairs dressed for her visit, she found her son alone, standing gravely in the great oriel window.

"Ronald, I wish you would come with me."

He shook his head.

"I don't share your romantic interest in Miss Earl, mother! I hate plain, unformed girls, and——"

She looked him full in the face.

"Do you hate Trevlyn, Ronald? Has it ever occurred to you that the Court itself may come to the hammer unless you make some sacrifice to save it?"

"Have you been talking to Ward?"

"No! I have known it long enough, only I would not worry you until I had seen the Earls. Fancy, Ronald, the master of Trevlyn and Earlsmere would be the richest land-owner in the county."

"Don't build castles in the air mother!"

"No one could refuse you, Ronald. I have never known you fail when once your mind was made up."

She said nothing more, but passed out to the waiting carriage.

Sir Ronald thought, a little sadly, unless the position of affairs changed very rapidly, there would soon be no carriage for her to drive in.

A bitter pang came to him that Mr. Ward's scheme was the only chance of saving his grand old home.

The contrast between the court and Earlsmere struck Lady Trevlyn painfully. At the first the grounds were almost wild; the gates were rusty with time, the furniture was old and faded; a look of neglect and dreariness had settled upon the grand old place; not because its owners did not love it, but from their trying scarcity of ready money.

The velvet lawns and brilliant flowerbeds, the trim, gravel walks of Earlsmere told of ample wealth—rare china and hothouse plants were tastefully grouped in the large hall, and a well-trained butler as well as two trim footmen sat there ready to announce visitors.

Miss Earl was at home. Lady Trevlyn nerved herself for an effort as she heard that.

She had come prepared to make herself exceedingly intimate with the young heiress.

She meant to overlook all Lilian's faults and deficiences, and as her mother's oldest friend love her very dearly. Whether this kindness was quite disinterested we will not say.

Woman of the world as she was, Lady Trevlyn's eyes almost filled with tears as she entered the grand drawing-room. She had not been there since the day when she had assisted Lady Earl to receive her bridal calls.

She had loved her dead friend very dearly. She seemed to see her now in her girlish grace and beauty, her timid love and admiration for the stately husband who never seemed quite aware what a tender treasure he had won.

Well, he had mourned her very truly, and now, after all those years, Marie Trevlyn was waiting to welcome Nora's daughter—the girl she fondly hoped would some day be Ronald's wife.

The moments seemed an eternity to Lady Trevlyn.

What if her son's suspicions were true, and the heiress had, indeed, been kept carefully excluded on account of some bodily affliction?

A club foot or a hump back would be a great drawback to a daughter-in-law; even the squint and red hair to which Ronald had alluded to were not to be desired.

Another moment and the velvet curtains were pushed aside.

A slight, girlish figure advanced towards the stranger with a perfect grace, mingled with the sweetest timidity.

All Lady Trevlyn's misgivings vanished. If this was indeed Lilian Earl, Ronald ought to be grateful she had been kept in seclusion, for she had a face fit to take the whole world by storm.

The young mistress of Earlsmere was dressed in a soft, white cambric, trimmed with dainty lace; a silver girdle fastened it at the waist, and a silver arrow secured the coils of her hair, which was of the deepest, rarest, golden brown.

She had large dark blue eyes, fringed with long lashes, and her face had the delicate carmine tint only seen in early youth—the features were perfect in their faultless regularity; but the strange, wistful, almost pathetic, smile gave a character and beauty to the whole face.

When her mouth was in repose Lilian looked a child; but when animation or interest brought that pleasing smile she was a woman.

Lady Trevlyn forgot everything, even her hopes.

She took the girl in her arms and kissed her as if she had known her all her life.

"Forgive me, my dear!" she said, kindly. "Your mother was my dearest friend. I could not let you be a day in England without coming to welcome you for her sake."

"It is very kind of you," said Lillian, speaking in a clear, musical voice, without a trace of a foreign accent. "I am so glad we have come to England, Lady Trevlyn. I have wanted to come home so often."

"And at last you persuaded your papa."

The heiress shook her head.

"He'd have come long ago if I had asked him, only I knew he dreaded it, so I would not; he has only come now because the doctors insisted upon it."

"You could not have chosen a better time. Blackshire looks its best in August."

"It is so strange to think I have never seen Earlsmere before, but I seem to know every room. I used to make papa tell me all about it."

"I hope I shall see Lord Earl!"

He came in almost as she spoke, and welcomed her with the stately courtesy she so well remembered. Two minutes convinced Lady Trevlyn that though he might not have been a devoted husband, he certainly loved his dead wife's child.

"And you have come to stay?" she asked him. "Oh! Lord Earl, I have often wondered how you could leave so fair a home."

"I shall stay," he replied, at once. "I want Lillian to feel at home here. I am getting an old man, and I could not have left my darling alone in a foreign land."

"Old man!" exclaimed his guest, with a smile, "you need not talk of being that for years. Why, it seems but the other day since you and Paul were friends and companions."

"Ah! it gave me a pang when I read his death in the paper. Is Sir Roland like him?"

"In face—nothing else. Oh! Lord Earl, I should like you to know my only son—he is the sunshine of my life."

"I hope he will come here," returned the peer, cordially. "I shall, indeed, be glad to know my old friend's son. I think friendship should go by inheritance, Lady Trevlyn."

"The very thing I said to myself as I drove over. I felt I could not leave Nora's child without a word of welcome."

Lord Earl dropped the carved ivory paper-knife with which he had been carelessly toying—a strikingly nervous man, his fingers were often playing with something as he talked.

"Lillian does not favor her parents," said Lady Trevlyn, presently. "She is not in the least like Nora, and I can trace no resemblance to you, Lord Earl."

"Why, my papa says that I am my mother's image!" said Lillian, in a surprised voice.

Lord Earl made no remark, and the guest felt instinctively she had pained them both.

"He must only say so because he wishes to believe it," she told her son afterwards. "Nora was a sparkling brunette, this child is as fair as—as her name," at a loss for a simile.

Very soon after that, Lady Trevlyn took her leave, having made father and daughter promise her a speedy visit at the Court. She drove off well pleased at the success of her afternoon's expedition.

Left alone, Lillian Earl took a low stool at her father's feet.

"Is it really true, dear?" she said, wistfully. "I like to think I remind you of mamma."

"You are your mother's image, my darling!" he cried, fondly putting his hand on her bowed head, "let who will contradict it. Heaven bless you, and give you a longer life, a happier fate than hers."

"She must have been happy," said Lillian, dreamily, "you loved her so."

"Love is not all," said Lord Earl, slowly.

"I think it must be the only thing worth having," replied Lillian. "I could bear any troubles if only I had you."

"You will have a nearer, dearer love some day, my darling. Lillian I have come to England for that, and that only. I want my child to be happy in a husband's keeping, safe from all dangers in a husband's love before I leave her."

"Don't," she whispered, kissing him, "dear, nothing in the whole world could make me happy if I lost you."

"Do you like Lady Trevlyn?"

Lillian hesitated.

"I think I am afraid of her, papa; I should not like to have Lady Trevlyn for an enemy. She looks to me as if she could kill one with her eyes if she were offended."

Some days later, Sir Ronald, entering the drawing-room abruptly, found his mother entertaining visitors; he almost started at the beautiful vision presented to him as Miss Earl.

With a rare prudence Lady Trevlyn had said very little of Lillian's attraction; Sir Ronald had been too indifferent to ask questions; and so though his mother had denied the existence of the squint or club foot, he had only been prepared for a very ordinary young lady.

He saw a fragile, delicate-looking girl, with a lovely, flower like face and courtly, high-bred manner.

"She is lovely now," he thought, a little wistfully. "In a few years' time she will be perfect; now she is almost a child. Those blue eyes are innocent and unconscious. She hardly knows her own attractions.

"When once that sleeping heart has awoke, when love shines in those blue eyes, she will be a creature made to win men's hearts and break them."

For once inclination and duty went hand in hand—for once judgment and fancy agreed.

Sir Ronald knew his whole future depended on his wooing an heiress, and here almost at his own threshold was the heiress, endowed with ample wealth and rare beauty.

The baronet had never liked to think of marriage.

In half an hour he had decided it would be more than endurable with such a wife as Lillian Earl.

And that first meeting was the prelude to many more. If ever fortune, fate and friends favored a pair of lovers, all these three powers smiled upon Sir Ronald's hopes.

His mother treated Lillian as a special favorite, and very often had her at the Court. Lord Earl never seemed quite so happy as when his old friend's son was at Earlsmere.

If ever man was given time, occasion and excuse for falling in love, the baronet was given them when fate threw him constantly in Lillian's society.

There were rides in the fair, open country, wanderings in the beautiful grounds of Earlsmere, pleasant evenings when Lord Earl had the newspaper, and Lillian sang, stirring Sir Ronald's heart as nothing had ever done before.

He loved her. In less than a month he had known his own secret. He began by thinking of the advantages such a match would bring him. He ended by loving her passionately, madly.

There was nothing unselfish in his affection, it was like the man's whole character.

Strong, violent, and determined from boyhood, Ronald Trevlyn had never failed in anything he undertook.

He meant to marry Lillian Earl. He would make her a good husband, perhaps, though he would bend her will to his, and treat her as something entirely his own.

He never thought of her refusing him—never dreamed how far unworthy he was of her.

Ronald Trevlyn had no misgiving. He could see that Lord Earl favored his suit, and the peer's consent was what had alone seemed doubtful to him.

And Lillian, to the girl who had led a lonely secluded life, with no friend or companion but her father, Sir Ronald Trevlyn was like a hero of romance.

His handsome face, fascinating manner, and noble bearing impressed her fancy.

She liked the shade of authority in his voice, it was something quite new to her. His mother's affection, warm and caressing as it was, never impressed her so much as the air of appropriation with which he took a seat beside her.

She wondered sometimes how he could care to spend so much time with one who knew so little of the world.

Simple, guileless Lillian, never once did it enter her mind that she was an heiress, and Sir Ronald Trevlyn a needy, embarrassed man.

"Lil," said Lord Earl, one night after the baronet had left them, "come here, I want to talk to you."

She sat on a stool at his feet, her golden head supported against his knee.

It was just as well, perhaps, her blue eyes could not read his face, for a great sadness reigned there.

"What is it, dad?"

"When I knelt by your mother's death-bed, Lil, when I took her ice-cold hand in mine, I swore a solemn oath that, Heaven helping me, you should never know a sorrow! Little girl, have I kept that vow?"

"Faithfully," she answered, "no sorrow has ever touched me. I wonder sometimes if it is all too bright to last!"

"I am getting old," said Lord Earl, slowly. "Dear, I may not be much longer at your side. Ronald Trevlyn has asked me to-night to give you to him. Lil, his father was my greatest friend—extravagant and wilful, lavish and rash, but tender-hearted always!"

Lillian nestled the least bit closer to him.

"Ronald loves you," went on her father, slowly. "He comes of a grand old family; his mother would welcome you as a daughter! Tell me, Lil, what do you think?"

"I will never leave you!"

But he saw the tear-drops shining in her eyes.

"Your marriage will cause my greatest anxiety, dear! If you love Ronald Trevlyn, I will give you to him gladly, freely, even though the giving condemned me to a lonely life."

Sir Ronald called around the next day, and Lord Earl sent him straight to the drawing-room.

Very gently, yet with an air of proud possession, the master of Trevlyn Court took Lillian's hand.

"Your father told me me to seek my answer from yourself. Lillian, will you be my wife?"

She looked at him with a face beaming in smiles.

"Do you really love me?"

"I love you more than I thought I could love anything," he answered. "The first day I saw you I made up my mind to win you. Lillian, can't you trust yourself to me? Indeed, I will make you happy if heart and life can. You are my first and only love, the first woman who has ever touched my heart!"

The girl's eyes drooped beneath his gaze. And then the baronet knew his cause was won.

He flung one arm round Lillian, and drawing her close to him, pressed passionate kisses on her unresisting lips.

"My own," he whispered fondly, "no one in all the world shall rob me of you, Lillian, my beautiful white flower; you are mine forever!"

Her fair head rested on his shoulder; she never resisted his proud air of possession, his passionate caresses; he was her love, her hero, her knight.

"Kiss me!" he enjoined, stroking her fair hair. Then as she did his bidding, and he strained her to his heart, it seemed to Ronald Trevlyn that for once fortune had been kind to him—the one woman whom in all the world he desired would be his own.

"You will come to me soon," he urged; "darling, I cannot do without my wife."

"It is all so new and strange; you have known me such a little time."

"Long enough to love you dearer than all else, Lillian. I shall get Lord Earl to plead my cause."

A little more lovers' talk, and the two separated. Sir Ronald went home to bear the good news to his mother.

Lillian sank back upon the sofa in a kind of day-dream, trying to realize her happiness and wishing, oh! so much, that the mother she had never known would come back if it were but for a moment, from the cloudless shore, to fold her to her heart, and hear her sympathy in this crisis in her life.

Her mother was to Lillian but an empty name; her father was her friend, guide, and counsellor.

When the first rapture of that interview was over, when she felt a little composed, she went in search of him, but that search proved unavailing.

Lord Earl was not in the library, not in the smoking-room; in vain she sought him in all his favorite haunts; at last in despair, she returned to the drawing-room, and rang the bell.

"Where is my father?" she asked the footman. She heard then that Lord Earl was engaged in a little room he called his office.

"I thought the steward came this morning?"

"Yes, miss; this is a person who requested to see his lordship on particular business. She would take no denial."

Lillian, wondering a little dismissed the man, and taking up a trifle of fancy work was soon trying to fix her attention upon it.

She little guessed the scene that was going on down-stairs, or the important part it would play in her own history.

In his own office-chair sat Lord Earl, his head thrown wearily back, as though mind and body were alike weary.

He looked very different now from the courtly host Lady Trevlyn knew or the tender father Lillian loved.

The veins in his forehead stood out like purple cords; a heavy shadow was on his brow; he started at every sound, as though he feared an interruption to the interview, and yet was so heart-sick and weary he would gladly have dismissed his visitor had he only dared.

She stood opposite to him as great a contrast to the peer, aye, and to the room itself, as could well be found.

A woman of the people—tall, large-boned, with a red face and bloodless lips, with black hair pushed back behind a bonnet, and hanging in untidy wisps; her dress, which had collected a quantity of damp mud, was full and long, forming almost a train behind; her red, ungloved hands were spread out defiantly, and, instead of being awed by the unusual splendor of her surroundings, she seemed to be perfectly assured of her own right to be there.

"It's no use of talking," she said, in a loud, insolent voice; "if you're so close-fisted ye won't part with a few pounds, I can go to them as will."

Lord Earl fairly groaned.

"You have no legal claim on me, none whatever, and you know it perfectly."

She shrugged her shoulders.

"I daresay you're a bit vexed at my turning up to-day, seeing I wasn't invited, but law, it 'ud been just the same. I've been waiting all these years for the chance of your coming back to England; and now here you are, and—and the matter's just in a nutshell—pay me what I want, or I'll just be off to those as will."

"And what security shall I have that you will keep your word?"

The woman laughed insolently.

"I reckon I shall keep it till hunger grips me again, or my man's out of work. I think my terms are fair enough."

"I have a great mind to send for a policeman, and give you in charge, Mrs. Bond!"

"I reckon as you'll think better of it, Lord Earl. Come!" persuasively; "what's a fi-pun note to such as you?"

Lord Earl took out his cheque-book, but the woman shook her head.

"Folks like us can't get 'em changed; better stick to the yellow boys!"

With an expression of disgust he counted five sovereigns from his purse and offered them to her. She took them up without a word of gratitude.

"You won't see me again till we're down in our luck. I'm awful glad you're back in England, I am; I said directly we heard it you'd be as good as an annuity to us."

He answered nothing; he bore the woman's insolence with a strange persistent patience. He himself ushered Mrs. Bond to the door, and saw her safely off the premises; only when she was out of sight did he press one hand to his heart and mutter:

"That pain again, I really must see someone! Well! I thought I was safe after all these years. I wonder how many five pounds will keep Mrs Bond quiet. I wish I had never come back to England. But for this affair of Lillian's and young Trevlyn! Would it make any difference to him if he knew all? No! Why should I misjudge him.

"No doubt he is like his father, true of heart; but oh! my child, my little Lil, Heaven grant I have not kept my miserable secret all these years only to make you wretched at last. How that woman has altered, gone steadily down hill all these years I should say. Strange how I have dreaded her coming; since we reached Earlsmere every day I have feared and dreaded her. Well, the worst is over now, and at least one thing is fortunate, she did not see Lillian."

It was getting late now—the short October day was closing in. Going upstairs he found Lillian in the drawing-room, dressed for dinner in pale blue cashmere, with hothouse flowers at her throat, and in the coils of her golden hair.

"Where have you been, papa?" she cried, I have wanted you so!"

He held her fondly in his arms. All that afternoon he had been reviewing his life's history, and wondering if he had acted wisely. The sight of Lillian's face, of the deep thoughtful happiness shining in her blue eyes, satisfied him as nothing else had done.

"Sir Ronald has gone home," she said, softly. "Papa, are you glad?"

"I am very glad if you are happy!"

"So happy," she whispered in his ear. "Papa, I think this is the brightest day of all my life!"

He was not given to emotion—reserved self-contained man his friends called him—and yet at Lillian's speech a tear rolled down his cheek, and fell upon her hand.

"It is coming right," he murmured to himself; "it was for her sake. I wronged no one. I did it for my darling, and it was worth all the long years of exile—the concealment, the deception; aye, if I had to again I would do it fearlessly—for her sake!"

It was getting dark; Lillian would have rung for lights, but he stayed her hand.

"I like the firelight best; you do not want to work or read, Lil; sit here by me!"

She came at once, slid her hand into his, and sat down at his feet. Then a great silence fell upon them both. Lil was thinking of her lover, of the great strange future which stretched before her. Lord Earl was busy with the past, the secret of his life, his sorrows and his sin.

He held Lillian's hand in his; from time to time he stroked her golden hair, but he was not thinking of her. For him the years had rolled away, and he saw her mother sitting there—her mother whom he had loved and lost.

So long did the silence last that Lilian grew uneasy.

The ormolu clock on the mantelpiece chimed eight; it was their dinner-hour; another minute, and the butler would appear. It was surely time to arouse her father. Rising, she laid one hand gently upon his shoulder.

"Papa!"

She noticed then that his eyes were closed. Her voice aroused him, he opened them, and stirred half uneasily.

"It is all right, my darling," he said, slowly; "I have kept your secret, and she is happy."

With a strange, sick faint dread Lillian realized his mind was wandering.

"It is I, papa, dear; do wake up and speak to me."

But though his eyes were fixed upon her face there was no sign he knew her. He seemed to be speaking to her, and yet his words must have been for someone else—no doubt her mother—his dear, dead wife.

"It has been a weary waiting, dear," he said, half brokenly, "but it is over now—I am coming my own, my darling—"

And even as he spoke he surely must have gone to the one he so much loved—his head fell back on the cushions.

Lillian bending over him felt that something awful had happened. She tore to the bell, and pulled it violently. The servants came in alarm, and tried to rouse their master. At last the old housekeeper put an arm round the trembling girl and took her to her own room, where she whispered to her that the silent form they had left on the sofa was not Lord Earl, but only his poor old remains—he himself, the tender, generous father who had long stood between Lillian and all sorrow had gone over to the great majority.

Weeping bitterly Lillian flung herself on her bed, the one ray of comfort in her misery that she was not utterly alone—there was one who would share her sorrow and soothe her tears—her father husband, Sir Ronald Trevlyn.

CHAPTER II.

LORD EARL was dead. The doctor was sent for at once; every possible effort to restore him was made, but all in vain. Death must have been instantaneous the man of physic told the housekeeper, and quite painless.

There sitting tranquilly in the autumn firelight, with his daughter beside him, the spirit had returned to the God that made it.

"But my lord was quite well," declared the faithful servant, almost unable to realize the truth; "he was not a strong man, perhaps, but he never ailed anything, never uttered a complaint."

"It was heart disease," the doctor explained; some terrible shock must have befallen him. Poor child," as he looked at Lillian's unconscious face. "It will be a bitter awakening for her."

She was lying on her own bed sleeping under the influence of a composing draught. So beautiful and placid was her face it was terrible to think of what her awakening must be.

"You must send for her friends at once."

"I can't, sir."

Dr. West started.

"It is impossible. Miss Earl can't be left here alone; you had better send for her nearest relations at once."

"How can I sir? The master was the last of his family; my lady was an only child. There may be cousins of hers alive, but I'm sure I don't know where to find them."

Dr. West remembered Trevlyn Court, and how intimate its mistress had been with Lord Earl—the open rumor which linked Lilian's name with the baronet's.

He left Earlsmere, feeling the kindest service he could render the orphan was to send her friend at once.

Lady Trevlyn and Sir Ronald had just finished dinner when he reached the Court; something unusual in his manner struck them both even before he spoke.

"I am come to ask your aid in an errand of mercy. Lady Trevlyn," he began; "I have grievous news for you. Lord Earl is dead, and that poor girl had no one but servants with her."

Mother and son grew pale with consternation.

"I will go at once," said the former, starting up! "But oh! Dr. West, how terribly sudden! Has there been an accident? How did it happen?"

"It was heart disease," he said, simply, "Lord Earl was sitting with his daughter in the drawing-room, and he passed away quite suddenly. I believe you know the family well. Can you tell me of any relations whom I ought to summon?"

"I believe they had no relations in the world. Lord Earl was the last of his family."

"Poor child! what a fate for her. Of course he has left her under some guardianship; but it is terrible to think of her being alone in the world at nineteen."

"She will not be alone long, doctor," said Lady Trevlyn, meaningly; "I hope she will be my daughter very soon."

When Lilian opened her eyes with the strange, bewildered look which always comes in the first awakening after any sorrow, Lady Trevlyn was sitting by the bedside, and the orphan soon found herself clasped in the arms of her future mother-in-law, who strove by many a tender word to soothe her grief; but Lilian sobbed on.

She felt that Lady Trevlyn was very kind; but the kindness could not reach her heart.

She had room but for one thought now that her father was dead, that the voice she best loved would speak to her on earth never more.

"You must come home with me," said Lady Trevlyn, when the sobs had subsided and Lilian, looking the very shadow of her former self, was sitting pale and wan in the cold, grey dawn of the October morning.

"Please let me stay here," pleaded the girl; "he wont be left me much longer; let me be with him while I can."

"You will make yourself ill will grief."

"I should grieve just as much anywhere. Oh! father, father! how could you leave me all alone?"

"Not alone, Lilian," said Lady Trevlyn, meaningly; "have you forgotten the promise you gave Ronald yesterday? Don't you remember you are to be a very daughter of my own?"

But the thought brought no comfort to the girl, she seemed too utterly stunned to realize it.

"I can do nothing with her," confided Lady Trevlyn to her son, when he rode over after breakfast; "she sits pale and motionless as a statue, and never seems to hear what I say to her."

"Poor child!" he said, pityingly; "it is a sudden blow."

"You will go to her, Ronald; you may be able to make her hear reason, and return with me to the Court."

He went in alone. Good Heaven! Was this the bright, beautiful creature he had seen only yesterday?

Why she looked as if she had been ill for weeks; her cheeks were pale as marble; there were purple rings round her blue eyes; she hardly seemed to heed his approach, but Ronald Trevlyn cared nothing for that; she was his own, she belonged to him, and he would persuade her to do his will, of course, for her own good.

"Lilian!"

She turned her face towards him, and its despair touched him to the heart.

He flung his arms round her, he stroked her soft hair lovingly, and called on her by every fond name to look up and speak to him.

"You are not all alone, my darling: you have me left. Lilian, you must come to us, and let my mother cheer and comfort you."

"I would rather stay here."

"Why?"

"I feel nearer to him here."

"You must not think only of him, dear; don't you remember yesterday you promised to give yourself to me? Lilian, for my sake, you must come away!"

She looked at him with piteous entreaty.

"Let me stay!"

"I will bring you back; you must come now," and taking up her hat he put it on with almost a woman's care, wrapped her in a warm shawl, and then carried rather than led her downstairs to where his mother's carriage was waiting.

Her ladyship had gone home before resigning the task of persuasion to him.

With his own hand he lowered the blinds placed himself at Lilian's side, and drew the weary, golden head to rest on his shoulders.

"It is my right to take care of you now," he said, very fondly, "and I mean to exercise it!"

She submitted like a worn-out child. As yet she did not realize the change twenty-four hours had made in her life.

She loved Ronald Trevlyn with that purest of all affections—a girl's first love. To her he was like a knight of olden days. His mother's tenderness had failed to touch her heart, but his own affection was very precious to her, and Ronald felt, as he caressed her, that his lot was now so hard to bear, for she was the only creature he had ever loved, and with herself she would give him wealth ample to restore his grand old home, and enable him to take his rightful position in the county.

The prettiest spare room had been made ready, and Ronald laid his betrothed upon the sofa with a tenderness which was something new to him.

Then he left her to rest, and followed his mother to her boudoir.

"I wonder what sort of a will Lord Earl has made!" began Lady Trevlyn, abruptly. "Of course, everything must go to Lilian, as he has no relations; but it will be satisfactory to know as soon as possible to whose guardianship he has left her."

"West has telegraphed to his solicitor, and also to a Captain Beaumont, who is a sort of cousin to the late Lady Earl."

A strange shadow crossed Lady Trevlyn's face.

"I suppose there can be no doubt about Lilian's heiress-ship," she said, suddenly; "it would be an awful thing if her wealth proved a delusion, for you have quite committed yourself now!"

"It will be no delusion," returned Ronald, quickly. "When I saw Lord Earl and asked for his daughter he told me she would have fifty thousand pounds on her wedding-day and everything he possessed at his death.

"It seems the entail on Earlsmere was cut off and all was in his power; he could leave everything to the merest stranger. Those were his words."

"But he would not have done so."

"No, he loved her too well to disinherit her. Mother, I expect the world at large will set me down as a fortune-hunter."

"You are not that," cried his mother, indignantly. "Any one can see that Lilian is your choice, and really, with a face like that, it is an insult to her as well as you to suggest anything else."

The day passed very quietly.

Lilian Earl did not leave her own sitting-room, but Sir Ronald spent most of his time with her.

Until the solicitors of the late Lord Earl appeared no arrangements could be made for the funeral.

It struck the Trevlyns as a little strange that no reply came from either these gentlemen or Captain Beaumont; but in the evening, while Sir Ronald was sitting with his betrothed, a card was brought him inscribed with the officer's name.

Sir Ronald hurried to the library, where he had held his memorable interview with Mr. Ward, and found a tall, soldierly man awaiting him with ill-suppressed impatience.

"Sir Ronald," began the stranger, "I have come on a very disagreeable errand."

This was not encouraging.

The baronet merely bowed and requested his visitor to be seated.

"I would rather stand," said Captain Beaumont. "When you have heard what I have to say you may not care to offer me a chair.

"The bearer of bad news is never welcome, but after Dr. West's telegram and your letter I felt it my duty to come here and see you, however painful such a task might be."

"I can only conclude," said the Baronet, stiffly, "that you come as Miss Earl's guardian to object to her engagement to myself. I can assure you that our betrothal had her father's full and free consent."

"My errand is altogether different. You tell me that my late cousin's husband left a daughter aged nineteen, whom you propose to make your wife. I think I have stated the facts correctly."

"Perfectly."

"Then, Sir Ronald, you are either the victim of an imposter or there is some extraordinary delusion. Lord Earl never had a daughter!"

Sir Ronald Trevlyn stared.

"You must be dreaming."

"Hear me out. My cousin Nora was brought up with me as a sister. I was intimate with her and her husband throughout their married life. I accompanied them abroad. I was present at Lady Earl's death-bed. Now, do you mean to say that if she had had a daughter I should not have been cognizant of it?"

"It is the most extraordinary statement I ever heard. Lord Earl returned to England this summer with a young lady, whom he installed mistress of his house and introduced to the county as his daughter."

"That proves nothing."

"I think it proves a great deal."

"He never introduced her to his wife's family: he shunned every relation of that wife ever since her death. You may ask anyone you please, Sir Ronald; they will tell you the same story. My cousin Nora, Lady Earl, died childless."

"Do you think there was a second marriage?"

"How could there be? Nora has been dead barely eighteen years! The girl, on your own showing, is nineteen. You may be angry with me, Sir Ronald, but I have come here to-night, in all kindness, to tell you the truth before it is too late."

It was too late already, as far as Ronald's heart went, but he did not say so.

"Then, whom do you suppose Miss Earl can be—a relation?"

"The Earls have no relations. I am utterly at sea. I have been to Lord Earl's solicitors, and they can throw no light on the subject, save that they drew up a will a great many years ago, leaving everything he possessed to his adopted child—generally known as Lilian Earl. The senior partner was appointed guardian and trustee to the young lady, and I believe he is quite willing to act."

"And you have seen the will?"

"No; it seems it was in his own possession. Martin came down from London with me; he has gone to Earlsmere to make all arrangements, and search for the will. We both felt it due to you that you should know the truth at once."

It was impossible to doubt the captain's sincerity, his manner was the essence of frank simplicity. Ronald Trevlyn put one hand to his aching brow; truly, things were not going after his wishes.

"Poor child!" said the soldier, pityingly. "From all I hear I expect she has not the slightest idea of all this. If it could possibly be managed, she ought never to know it."

"I would be no party to such a conspiracy!" said Trevlyn, bitterly. "I consider I have been shamefully treated, and that your cousin has behaved abominably from first to last."

"Very probably, had his life been spared, he would have told you himself," impelled by the baronet's manner to take his dead friend's part; though he had come to the Court very full of sympathy with its master.

"He ought to have told me at once."

"But your engagement only dates from the day of his death. If you don't care to marry the young lady as his adopted daughter and heiress, you will be perfectly free to resign all claims to her hand."

"And break my word?"

"There would be no dishonor in it," said the other, coldly. "If the girl were penniless and homeless it would be the basest shame to desert her; but the heiress of fifteen thousand a-year will not be left long to wear the willow if you did not deem her worthy to share your name."

"You are mocking me."

"No; the affair is very sad from first to last; and yet poor Earl doubtless acted for the best, and no one will blame decision. If you love the girl, surely my cousins heiress cannot be considered a *mesalliance*. If you regard your name too much to share it with her, why, as I said before, no one would cry shame on you for giving up one who would have brought you an immense fortune."

Both men had remained standing, and now the captain moved towards the door.

"I should like to see her," he said, slowly; "but it is too soon to think of that; a stranger must not intrude upon her grief."

"You will surely stay the night? My mother——"

"A thousand thanks, but I am to sleep at Earlsmere. Martin relies on my assistance."

He did not offer Sir Ronald his hand; it was strange how his feelings had changed since entering the house.

He had come there full of sympathy for the ancient family he deemed so imposed on, and not a little indignant with the poor girl who had posed as his cousin's daughter. He went away full of a profound pity for the girl who thought herself Lilian Earl, if she was compelled to pass her life at Sir Ronald's side.

"He won't give her up, her fortune will keep him faithful; but he will never forgive her the deception. Poor child! I wonder if she loves him? I daresay she does; women have a knack of fancying men utterly unworthy of them. Sleep there, indeed! Why, once or twice I was longing to knock him down as it was. I shall give Martin a hint what sort of fellow he is. If he is sole guardian he ought to refuse his consent to the marriage until he is quite sure his ward's happiness is bound up in it."

He found the solicitor waiting for him with a strangely-troubled face.

The two men had been friends from boyhood; in fact, they had been schoolfellows, and at forty-five and fifty a real intimacy united them.

"Well," said Mr. Martin, eagerly; "what news? Was Sir Ronald ready to knock you down?"

"He was far more ready to abuse poor Earl."

"What sort of a man?"

"I don't like him."

The lawyer laughed, he really could not help it.

"That's no answer."

"Well, then, he's selfish to the very core. I'm sure he was divided only between the grief of resigning the girl's fortune and a desire to break off the engagement to avenge the deception practiced on him."

"Did you see her?"

"No; I meant to hate her, but when I had once seen the man she was to spend her life with I was ready to do anything for her."

"Strange! Every one speaks well of Sir Ronald.

"He's an intensely cautious man—not the sort to make enemies."

"What could your cousin have seen in him?"

Cecil Beaumont shrugged his shoulders.

"Goodness knows! Have you searched among the private papers yet, Martin?"

"Yes," succinctly.

"Well?"

"It isn't well, at all. That's all I found."

And he showed a letter addressed in the hand both knew so well "To Lilian."

"And the will?"

"He's destroyed it."

"What?"

"It's too true. I suppose this engagement necessitated fresh arrangements; but why couldn't he have waited a few days? Why will people keep their wills themselves?"

Cecil Beaumont was silent from sheer amazement; for quite five minutes no one spoke, then the soldier said, sadly—

"So ends all chance of Lilian's becoming Lady Trevlyn."

"Surely the man won't dare to desert her?"

"He will, mark my words."

"Well, it's a sad business!"

"Who takes the property? If they've a heart in their body they'll provide for the girl."

Mr. Martin shook his head.

"It may be years before we discover the heirs. Lord Earl and his father before him were both only children; it will rest among the descendants of his great grandfather—a pretty remote relation to come into this place and that splendid income! It's enough to bring the poor fellow back to life, the injustice of it. All he has must go to enrich a positive stranger, whom he has never seen; and his own darling, whom he cherished as his very life, is left penniless, to the mercy of the world!"

The soldier's only answer was a question which had never occurred to either of them before—

"Who is to tell her?"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Bric-a-Brac.

SHAVED.—When a Chinese boy is one month old his head is shaved and a bladder is drawn over it, and as his head grows the bladder bursts and the queue sprouts forth. The first shave is made the occasion of a magnificent banquet, and the guests are expected to make the host a handsome present in coin for the newly-shaven baby, with which a bank account is started to his credit. This is the most pleasant feature of the affair for the baby, as the razor always pulls and he cannot take part in the feast.

THE PIE.—Most people, it appears, unwittingly commit a dreadful heresy over the ordinary Christmas mince pie. Its usual shape is round. Four centuries ago however to eat a round mince pie would be to stigmatise oneself as a Jew heretic. The orthodox shape is a long oval. It was doubtless meant to represent the cradle in Bethlehem; and tradition further asserts that the strange mixture which makes the mince, represents the fruits and spice with which the three kings in the legend filled the cradle.

"A COUPLE."—The word "couple," a writer in the objects, is much misused. "The root of the word," he says, "is a Hebrew noun, meaning a 'letter,' but we got it from the Latin *copula*, a joining, and it should never be used except in the sense of joined together. A man and his wife are properly a 'couple;' so are two hounds when strapped together; but two eggs are not a couple, nor are two days a 'couple of days.' Fowls when alive and running about are not couples, but when killed and tied in pairs for sale they become couples."

ROSEWOOD.—Rosewood trees are found in South America and in the East Indies and neighboring islands. There are half a dozen kinds. The name is not taken from the color of the wood, as is generally supposed, but by reason of a rose-like fragrance which it possesses when first cut. Some of the trees grow so large that planks four feet broad and ten feet in length can be cut from them. The broad planks are principally used to make tops for pianofortes. The rosewood tree is remarkable for its beauty. Such is its value in manufactures as an ornamental wood that some of the forests where it once grew abundantly have now scarcely a single specimen. New plantations have been set out, so that the supply will not be exhausted.

WOMEN AS PORTERS.—"Get me two coolies for my luggage please," I said to the genial hotel proprietor at Benares, India, in parting, says a correspondent. A few minutes later a couple of women came around in obedience to the request. I was a little abashed at the idea of turning over my heavy satchels to the tender care of members of the gentler sex, and perhaps I glanced around to see if there were any Americans looking on; but I had witnessed exhibitions of female strength ever since I reached India, and had not the remotest doubt that they would be equal to the emergency, as they were abundantly. So I marched along at the head of the procession (an Oriental always follows you in all meekness) and soon took the night express on the Oudh and Rohilkund Railroad for Lucknow.

OLD BELIEFS.—The fable of the mermaid and the siren is slow in dying. Less than fifty years ago the people of the country for miles around swarmed at a little seaport in the south of England at a rumor that a mermaid had been seen sitting on a rock combing its luxuriant locks in the moonlight. The sea satyr and the triton were familiar beliefs with the ancients. About a hundred years ago one of the latter was alleged to have been captured off the coast of Portugal in the very act of blowing his conch. Barnacle geese was a curious and strong belief in the middle ages. A gentleman did not omit to say that he had seen the diminutive goslings dropped from the shell of the mussel. Within a comparatively short period a letter appeared in an English newspaper relating how a barnacle goose, grown to a great size, had swallowed a full-rigged ship and all on board save the writer.

FLOWERS IN THE WINDOW.

BY O. W. M.

Put flowers in your window, friend,
And Summer in your heart;
The greenness of their mimic boughs
Is of the woods a part.
The color of their tender bloom
Is love's own pleasing hue,
As surely as you smile on them,
They'll smile again on you.

Put flowers in your window, friend,
Upon the busy street,
That some poor brother drawing near
May breathe the fragrance sweet;
Some little child with spectral face
May see the bud in bloom,
And think upon the pleasant sight
In distant haunts of gloom.

Put flowers in your window, friend,
To shield the passer-by;
'Twill give enchantment to the view,
And shade the weary eye.
The shrunken, pallid cheek will glow
With color warm and true,
When looked on through the flowery screen
That shields the world from you.

AN ODD WOOING.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE LIGHTS OF ROCKBY," "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER X.

NEXT morning Allan had a long interview with Mother Nan, and, after much bargaining, secured the custody of his son, and the promise of secrecy, for ten pounds.

He left her to invent any tale she pleased for the benefit of the child's mother, but he declined to give his name and address.

Ten pounds' worth of Old Tom was something to Mother Nan, and, after some crocodile tears, she rigged out Tommy in the best clothes he had (which was not saying much), and started him off, hand in hand, had she but known, with his father.

* * * * *

He was fitted out in a kind of way, and a more respectable get-up at the hotel, and two days later Allan and he returned to London.

A first-rate nurse was engaged by Allan, who felt uncommonly out of his element, and inclined to laugh in the woman's face whom he put in charge of Master Tommy, and she, for her part, was quite flabbergasted, as she expressed herself to her intimates, at being hired and her character taken up by a good-looking, single-looking young gentleman, just like an officer.

However, the wages and perquisites were well worth her attention, and she accepted the post of Tommy's nurse with great alacrity; but who was Tommy's mamma? No one knew.

Yet Tommy was spoken of by his father as his son and heir.

Who was Lady Kingsford? Where was she?

Nothing satisfactory could be gained from Tommy himself, who had no recollection of any mamma, only "Mother Nan."

There was something very queer, not to say fishy, about the whole business, quoth Miss Tait, but all the same, money was money, and Lord Kingsford was a nice-spoken young man, and seemed very fond of Tommy.

She overheard the following very odd conversation one day, as she stood outside in the passage, at the door of Lord Kingsford's dressing-room.

He was preparing to dine out, and undergoing all the mental agony attendant on making a first-class white tie.

Two failures lay beside him on the floor, and Tommy sat on a chair with a trumpet in his hand, kicking his legs backwards and forwards, in a most independent manner.

Tommy (who would recognize him now?) Tommy, in a splendid black velvet frock, with point lace collar and cuffs, silk socks, and lovely shoes!

He was saying as Tait came within earshot—

"Allan, I wish you would stay at home and play with me!"

"I wish I could," returned the other, without hesitation. "But I say, old chap, you must not call me Allan, you know; it will not do; you are to call me 'Father.'"

"Father!" echoed the mite; "why, Poppy had a father, a very ugly man, but I had none. I can't call you that!"

"Oh, yes, you can," returned Allan, now getting into his coat, and turning towards the child as he spoke. "I'm your father, you know, and you are going to live with me always now."

"I know I am, of course, and I am very glad, for I like you. But Poppy had a mother. Have I a mother, too?" anxiously. "Poppy's mother used to beat her," in a tone of real tragedy. "I don't want a mother."

"Then, that's all right," replied Allan, as he turned away, and dabbed a handkerchief out of a sachet, with a very grave face. "You need not be frightened, old man, no once will beat you; you have no mother."

Here Tait, who had been lingering outside, entered, having made a note of all she had heard, and carried off Tommy, who went away in the highest spirits, on the strength of the welcome and delightful intelligence, that he had no mother."

"Poor little chap," said Allan, with a regretful sigh. "I suppose I'll have to try and be both, and I don't know in the least how I'm to set about it."

In two minutes more he was in a hansom on route to a grand dinner in Belgrave-square, where, as a rich, good-looking, titled bachelor he was made a great deal of.

But before he left London for his country place, "Armine Court," it had become generally mooted about that the new Lord Kingsford, such a handsome, distinguished looking young man, was a widower (so interesting), with one child, a little boy, and that he never spoke of his wife to any one.

It was evidently a very painful subject probably she died when his child was born.

And with these tidings preceding him, Lord Kingsford and his heir came down to Armine Court, and established themselves quite accidentally and unconsciously in the neighborhood of a young lady, who was the wife of one, the mother of the other—the beautiful Miss Rosamond Dane.

CHAPTER XI.

AND now to return to Rosamond, after all those years, and see how she has fared since we last saw her.

She is greatly changed, not so much in person as in mind.

Altogether, the beautiful Miss Dane, with her fashionable clothes, fashionable airs, and fashionable fringe, no more resembles "the Rose of Drydd," than a sweet wild flower resembles a stiff and artificial-looking camellia.

In mind Rosamond is fashionable, too; her early griefs have stunted her good qualities, her early affections being nipped in the bud.

She is now as hard and worldly-minded, and heartless, and callous, to all appearances at least, as any young woman between the four seas.

She is very lovely, and is perfectly conscious of the fact; and gives herself great airs on the strength of her reputation of being a London beauty.

She is, moreover, a great heiress, as times go, and thoroughly understands her own value, thanks to Mrs. Maggs.

She never gives a thought to Drydd, to Allan, and to the little grave she once wept over.

She pictures to herself that all these things happened in a former state of existence.

And when her mind sometimes conscientiously touches on the past, she recoils from it with a shudder.

She firmly believes that Allan, under another name, betrayed and deserted her; and sometimes, as she stands a kind of queen among other girls, the thought of what she believes herself to be makes her ordinarily pale face crimson to the roots of her hair, with an agony of shame.

"If people only knew," she would say to herself, with clenched hands. "If these men who make love to me had the smallest idea of the living lie, the whited sepulchre I am, what would they think—what would the world say?"

But the world knew nothing, and said nothing, beyond the common remark, "that the beautiful Miss Dane was very supercilious, very disdainful, and very hard to please."

After some months in Florence Miss Dane had begun to recover her spirits a little.

After all, at nineteen there is a good deal of elasticity in one's disposition. She turned over a new leaf that very much amazed her mother and Miss Brand, who were disposed to keep her well in the background, and let her enjoy the role of the poor relation; and, being so broken in spirit and health for a long time, they never really guessed at the kind of girl that they had to deal with.

A battle royal before long opened their eyes to their very widest extent, and in the following manner:—Colonel, Mrs. and Miss Brand had been to a grand reception, and were leaving their "Cinderella" at home as usual.

The said Cinderella, pacing the roof of their hired palace with her hands locked behind her and staring at the dark, star-scattered sky, was thinking of very many things, and had got hold of some new ideas.

She would no longer live in sackcloth and ashes; she would make a fresh start, enjoy her youth, and bury her old past in oblivion.

To enjoy life she must go out and mix with people, like other girls.

She must dress, and ride, and drive, and sing, and dance, and spend money. She must no longer be crushed, and cowed, and bound down by her mother and Louisa, and keep quiet all her life for what, after all, was not her fault.

Her sin, if sin there was, surely should not lie at her door!

She made up her mind to begin life afresh—enjoy it she might not, but she could pretend to do so, and it would end in becoming second nature, and bringing her forgetfulness.

Next morning as the three ladies were sitting in the saloon after breakfast Rosamond suddenly said—

"You seem to have enjoyed your dance very much last night, Louisa?"

"Yes, I did, of course!" returned the other, with a cold stare, resuming the perusal of a note in her hand.

"In future I shall go out too, in future you may accept invitations for me, mother," remarked Rosamond.

For a moment there was an impressive, awestruck silence, and then Mrs. Brand said very sharply—

"Rosamond, you must be mad! Consider your position!"

"I am not the least mad, mother. My position has hitherto been a cruel and an unfortunate one. I want a change; I am tired of being miserable."

"A change! You should be very thankful to be as you are. What more would you have, pray?"

"I would have balls, theatres, a horse to ride, plenty of nice new dresses a maid, jewelry."

"Great heaven! You are raving!"

"No I am not, my dear mother. Why should I not have some of the advantages of being a great heiress?"

At this social bomb, so unexpected, so sudden, Mrs. Brand became scarlet, then ghastly white.

Of course the secret could not be kept from Rosamond always. But how did she know?

"What do you mean?" inquired her mother, angrily.

"I mean that if grandmamma left me all her money, more than six thousand a-year, I should like to spend at least some of it. I have only two scudi in my purse, only two dresses in my wardrobe, and I don't like being poor when I need not be so. I'm not fond of the role of Cinderella!"

"You must remember you are not your own mistress till you are twenty-five, and this new whim of yours, if you should court retirement, is ridiculous. Your money is ours at present—you are a minor."

"I do not like talking about money in this way to you, mother, and you are most welcome to half of all I have," said Rosamond, in a cool, decided tone; "but if you insist on keeping me in leading strings I rebel, and I shall appeal to my solicitors. I am not bound to live under your roof, and from what I have heard there are trustees.

"I can live with some person, no doubt, who will see matters in a better light as far as I am concerned. You and I do not pretend to care for each other as mother and child.

"We were strangers for eighteen years—we must to a certain extent always be strangers—but we need not quarrel. We will part friends. Louisa is far more really your daughter than I am.

"You don't care for me—you don't really know me. You think I am a half silly, ignorant country girl. I am not! I was once, but I have had a lesson that has made me, I believe, as hard, and as cold, and as worldly as anyone in the city of Florence."

During this long speech Mrs. and Miss Brand gaped with distended eyes and parted lips at the tall white figure standing beside the table.

Was this the childish, easily led, easily hoodwinked Rosamond? No, most decidedly not, and they must temporise. If she went and put herself in the hands of trustees the yearly income went too, and that would never do.

So they became gradually quite complacent, and stifled their feelings, and entered into all her views without further expostulation or argument.

In due time Miss Dane burst forth on Florentine society like a beautiful butterfly and turned the heads of half the young men in the place.

She rode, and danced, and flirted, and lived in a perpetual, almost feverish, state of mental and bodily activity.

It had become known that she was the heiress—the golden goose—and many and many, and titled were her suitors.

Not a few impoverished or even passably wealthy noblemen laid their hearts and their coronets at her feet, simply to be spurned, and her inaccessibility became as much a byword as her wealth and her beauty.

After two years' wandering the Brands returned home, and, by Rosamond's wish, rented a very pretty country place in a fashionable county about forty miles from London.

Here they settled, gave grand entertainments, hunted in winter, had tennis parties in summer, and were quite among the leading spirits of the place, and very popular people.

By chance it happened that the great, big empty Hall, about three miles distant, was called Armine Court.

It had not been occupied for years, and was the property of the new lord, whom people said was a bachelor, fond of wandering about, and if at home, a regular London club man.

Armine Court was quite the show place of that part of the country, was visited by artists and tourists from afar, was even deserted by picnics, was uninhabited, stately, and deserted, save for a few gardeners about the once-magnificent grounds, and a couple of army pensioners in either lodge.

Miss Brand was married, had succeeded in snaring a heavy, bucolic squire, and had taken herself and her handsome trousseau away to the north of England, and Mrs. Brand had replaced her and filled her gap in the family circle by a very pretty, bright little niece of her own called Amy Glen.

She was older than Rosamond, but looked younger, being very fair and petite, with forget-me-not eyes and retrousse nose, and hair the color of spun silk.

She knew nothing of Rosamond's past, and she and Rosamond were excellent friends, far more en rapport than Rosamond had ever been with Miss Brand.

Amy was an amusing, shallow, empty-headed little butterfly, with warm and sudden fancies, which passed away, fortunately for her, and were easily forgotten.

She had been in love half-a-dozen times, and yet, she was not heart-broken, and was quite ready to be in love half-a-dozen times again.

Love with her, like many women—more a pleasant piquant sensation for the time it lasted, and a little episode in her life, and no more.

Now, Rosamond had no love affairs, and waged in her own person a vendetta against mankind.

Dozens, I am sorry to say, she had flirted with and encouraged, and then tossed aside as if they were a faded bouquet.

She was avenging herself on every man she met, every man who was ensnared by her beautiful face, for the wretch who had once betrayed her: and wherever she went as Freddy Brand admiringly remarked to a bosom friend, she left a track marked by the slain behind her.

CHAPTER XII.

IT was Rosamond's custom to drive over to Armine Court sometimes, and then, leaving the little pony-carriage outside the gates, ramble through the woods with Amy, or about the pleasure-grounds, or over the moss-covered walks in the old walled-in garden.

This great deserted, forlorn old place had a soothing influence on her, an attraction for her, for which she could not account.

At the highest point of view, up through the woods, on a kind of a plateau, at the end of a steep climb, stood a pagoda, from which a fine view all over the country was to be obtained.

It was called by the name of Kingsford's Folly.

Rosamond was very fond of climbing up this Folly, leaning her elbows on the balustrade on the top, and surveying the country.

This particular evening she had come up alone, leaving Amy gathering ferns in the woods, the ponies at the nearest gate, and indulged in a whole hour of solitude and a multitude of day-dreams.

At last the stiffness of her elbows, and the sloping western sun warned her that it was time to return, and with a sigh she replaced her hat and slowly commenced to descend the steps of the pagoda, daintily gathering up her dress.

Two people were sitting on the steps at the bottom as she came down, sitting, of course, with their backs to her—a young man and a little boy.

The child was leaning confidentially against his companion, who was busily engaged in cutting something out of wood—some toy, apparently.

Visitors, like herself, thought Rosamond, come to see far-famed Armine Court.

The sound of her steps was unheard by either of them, they were so eagerly intent on the work in hand, until "Would you kindly permit me to pass?" roused the gentleman effectually, and he started up at once, hat in hand, perceiving a very beautiful, tall, slight, somewhat imperious looking girl standing before him.

He looked at her a second time with a sharp, quick glance, and in an instant his bronzed complexion had become of a faint ashen hue, and he staggered a little to one side and leant against the stone balustrades leading up to the pagoda for support.

"Are you ill—is anything the matter?" asked Rosamond in alarm.

"Oh!"—recovering a little as he spoke—"it is nothing, a little giddiness. Do not be alarmed—it will soon go off," not looking at her as he spoke.

Rosamond never knew what impelled her to speak to him again instead of passing on—this tall, dark stranger, who seemed now quite self-possessed and restored, and who had stared at her so steadily, and yet there was nothing rude in his gaze.

"It is a pretty place, is it not?" waving her hands towards the woods and distant towers. "I advise you to make the most of your time, for Lord Kingsford is expected home very shortly, and then we shall all be shut out," with a smile.

"What a sweet little boy," glancing admiringly at Tommy, who was gazing with round astonished eyes at the beautiful young lady who stood above him on the steps.

Little did he guess that this lovely apparition was his mother; but Allan in a second glance had recognized his wife. True the girl who had so suddenly descended, the pagoda steps was exquisitely dressed in a soft white dress, evidently from artistic hands; her hat was half-covered with drooping white feathers, and silver bangles were on her wrists, long tan gloves on her hands, a crimson parasol was tucked under her arm, her hair was worn in a fringe, her face was harder, but its outlines were sharper and more beautiful than of yore.

This was no pink and white country bumpkin, but a lovely, fashionable, supercilious looking London girl, and yet all the same it was Rosamond—his wife.

She looked curiously at this dark, handsome stranger, leaning against, bareheaded, the balustrade, who had not even opened his lips as yet.

His pale face, his quivering nostrils, his whole appearance transformed by some sudden and inexplicable emotion, whilst the little boy, childlike, had seized the half-finished toy.

"You are ill," she urged again. "Let me send for some brandy—for a doctor. My servants are close by with the pony-carriage."

"I am not ill!" he replied, rather roughly. "It is nothing, nothing," passing his handkerchief across his forehead as he

spoke. "Do you live near here?" he asked, rousing himself with an effort, and walking beside her down the steps.

"Yes, about three miles off. I adore this old place. I enjoy rambling about in the roads so much," walking still beside the stranger down the hill. I do wish the owner would not come home just yet!"

"Why?" he inquired, without looking at her.

"Because I suppose he will soon put a stop to strangers marauding about the place," now putting up her parasol. "I believe he is a regular recluse, and doesn't want to see his fellow-creatures—a woman-hater too."

"Who has been telling you this?" he asked, slowly.

"Oh! rumor."

"Rumor is wrong for once; he is not at all averse to society, and will only be too glad to see people coming and going about the place the same as usual. I hope you will as often as you please!"

"I. You hope. Why, do you know him?" raising her brows in amaze; "do you know the present Lord Kingsford?"

"As far as anyone can know themselves."

"Do you mean that you are he?"

Allan bowed profoundly, and said, "I must introduce myself, as there is no one else to do it for me."

"And I suppose I must do ditto," said Rosamond, blushing a little and laughing as she spoke. "I am Miss Dane; we live over there," pointing with her parasol; "my mother, who has married again, Mrs. Brand, Colonel Brand and I, at a pretty old place we have taken for the present, called Violet Hill. I daresay you know it."

"No, I am quite a stranger down here," replied Allan, "and know nothing of the neighborhood."

"You must have arrived quite unexpectedly?" she said, glancing at him interrogatively.

"I came last night."

"And is this your little boy?" nodding at Tommy, who had been trotting along hand-in-hand with his father up to the present, his clutched in his grasp.

"Yes,"—(and yours too, he might have added, but he did not.)

"What a sweet little cherub, and how like you!" looking critically at Tommy. A pause and then she said, "and when are we to see Lady Kingsford—is she here?"

This was an awkward question, and for nearly a whole minute Allan could not think of any appropriate reply.

Rosamond herself unexpectedly came to the rescue, saying, "I don't mean the Dowager, I mean your wife, this little boy's mother!"

"Yes, I quite understand," he said stiffly; "he has never known a mother."

"No! Poor little darling! How sad. I think there is nothing so forlorn as a motherless child."

To this observation her companion made no reply, and the two walked down one of the wide grassy avenues in silence; she thinking, "Evidently his wife is a sore subject; she died when the child was born. What a splendid part he will make for some girl in the neighborhood, this interesting widower!"

A turn in the avenue brought a low pony carriage and smart pair of chestnut ponies into sight, with a very dapper groom in top boots standing at their heads, whilst a girl in a blue dress was evidently conveying a quantity of ferns into the carriage.

"I've got such a lot of 'hart's tongue,'" she said, over her shoulder; "nearly a haystack of other ferns."

"You've been caught in the act of robbing the woods, Amy; here is Lord Kingsford himself. Lord Kingsford—Miss Glen—convicted of theft."

Amy, turned round with a startled face and increased color, found herself confronted by a tall, dark, young man, with a small child beside him; a young man who certainly looked like Lord Kingsford.

Amy was a good deal flustered, and made a series of pretty little apologies, which, needless to say, were laughed away by Allan, who had now entirely recovered his habitual self-possession.

He himself helped to put the young ladies into their pony-carriage, and to stow away the ferns and grasses with the very best results and into the smallest space.

Amy chattering and smiling away all the time.

"I hope you will find your way over to Violet Hill, Lord Kingsford," said Rosamond, as she took up the reins. "Colonel Brand will call, of course, but please don't be ceremonious. We have tea and tennis every Thursday afternoon, and we shall be very glad to see you."

In answer to her he raised his hat, and muttered some unintelligible reply, and as his eyes met Rosamond's point-blank, she felt a kind of thrill of recognition that made every atom of color fade from her face.

He had Allan's eyes, and the effect of this discovery unnerved her to such an extent that she could barely hold the reins, hardly guide the excessively hot-tempered little pair who were now tearing along on their road home.

Allan watched her as she dashed round the corner and out of sight.

Who would fancy, what sane person would believe, that that pretty girl who had just driven away was his wife!—the wife he had not seen for more than four years—the wife who had ignored and forgotten him, and deserted Tommy?

How strange that they should meet thus, that she had not even a glimmering of the truth!

Tommy found his playfellow very unusually silent, as they slowly wended their way home, and his constant utterance, "Talk, father, talk," met with but little attention—and who can wonder?

Rosamond, too, was unusually distant; she hated having the past brought back to her in any shape or form, and that man's eyes had evoked a spirit that latterly had seemed to have been successfully laid.

Her answers to Amy were distant and at random; she did not join in her little friend's eulogies on Lord Kingsford's appearance, nor her raptures over his dear little boy. She felt every nerve unstrung, she could not say why.

It was odd that a passing resemblance had shaken her so much; she felt cold and trembling all over.

"There is no Lady Kingsford," returned Rosamond, "he said that the boy had no mother."

"Dear me, a widower, how romantic! How all the mothers and daughters in the place will be exercised in their minds when they know that!" exclaimed Miss Glen.

"He would suit you admirably, Rosie; you would scarcely turn up your nose at him, now would you?"

"What a little match-making witch you are, Amy!" flipping one of the ponies, who instantly lashed out playfully at the splash-board.

"You need not put me down in this race for a coronet, for, as I have told you fifty times over, I never intend to marry, never—never—never! and I would not have you speculate on Lord Kingsford; he does not look like a marrying man."

"I suppose that child is the heir."

"Naturally."

"He looks about four years old. I wonder how old Lord Kingsford is himself?"

"Oh—four or five-and-thirty, I should say."

"Not so old as that; he had a look to me as if he had come through some great trouble, and had been aged by that. What do you think, Rosie?"

"I think you are more full of fancies than anyone I have ever met; but granting your idea to be the correct one, I suppose the trouble was his wife's death. Here we are!"

CHAPTER XIII.

COLONEL BRAND, as well as all the magnates in the neighborhood, called upon Lord Kingsford, and he duly returned their visits and announced that he had come to settle in the country for some time.

His antecedents were wrapped in mystery; but when a man is rich, very rich, titled, young, and unmarried, people are not too searching in their inquiries. He was, as everyone could see, a perfect gentleman.

He was clever and well educated, and he told someone quite casually (who told it to dozens of others), that he had been poor enough in his day; and his coming in for the property and title was a most unexpected piece of fortune.

He further stated that he had spent some years abroad, and knew a little of the colonies, but queries, delicate hints or artistic feelers with regard to Lady Kingsford met with no response.

The housekeeper, a plump, old lady, with a generous figure and a front, had told inquiring friends that she had never heard of her.

Tommy did not remember her, only an old woman called "Mother Nan," and there was no picture of her anywhere, for between ourselves his lordship's dressing-room and writing table had been rigorously searched, and no photograph of any lady was to be found. He did not care for ladies, it was commonly reported, nor for the sex, young or old.

He read, he rode about the farms, he shot, he fished, and he lead a very quiet, domestic kind of life, with Tommy for his only companion.

They looked an odd couple, Colonel Brand declared (having suddenly dropped in to lunch one wet afternoon) in that great panelled dining-room, with three men in waiting—Lord Kingsford at the foot of the table, looking on and crumbling biscuits; whilst Tommy, in a high chair with a pinafore tucked well round him, was doing a great business with his pudding and a spoon, this being his dinner-hour.

"Must be lonely work for you," said Colonel Brand, gobbling down Mulligatawnay as he spoke. "First-class soup this, as good as I'd get in India. Wonder you don't marry again, eh?"

Lord Kingsford looked at his guest with a cool, measured glance that the latter did not relish, and felt that his host considered that he had been guilty of a liberty.

"You said that young Hancock had a couple of sound young horses, did you not?" was the only remark that he made, and Colonel Brand, glad to see that there was a loop-hole for other conversation, flung himself headlong into the question of young and likely hunters for the coming season, and discussed points and prices.

"I know a good deal about the matter, you see," he frankly stated; "for Rosamond, that's my step daughter, is wonderful girl to ride to hounds, and of course I've to see she's always well mounted. Money no object" (rather ostentatiously).

"I suppose not," acquiesced his host, politely.

"By Jove, no! that girl, my dear sir, has six thousand a year of her own," helping himself to stewed oysters as he spoke. "Not bad for a single lady, eh?"

"No! not bad," replied the other abstractedly—he was repeating to himself as he glanced at Tommy, "six thousand a year, and she grudged seven shillings a week for the support of her child."

"Yes! six thousand a year!" proceeded Colonel Brand, unctuously. "Of course she has had dozens and dozens of offers; Italian marquises, French dukes, English lords, and would not have anything to say to one of them; she's devilish and very hard to please.

"I'm always telling my wife she'll never marry. She's waiting for something like the man in the moon.

"She's not very strong, and if anything were to happen to her, of course it would be a great thing for the next heir—she not being married. You understand?"

Of course," politely. "I understand perfectly," assented Colonel Brand's host, whilst Rosamond's next heir drummed away loudly on his empty plate with his empty spoon.

It cleared in the afternoon, and Colonel Brand (who never wanted anything for the asking), suggested that Lord Kingsford should drive him back to Violet Hill, and have a cup of tea, and chat with the girls. The matter was put before him in a way there was no getting out of, and he submitted to his fate, and was soon bowling along in a very high dog-cart with Colonel Brand smoking one of his best cigars, in a state of beatitude beside him.

Here he was bringing home the great catch of the county in his train, in spite of the cool way he had received the little hint about the second wife.

As they turned in at the Avenue they overtook Rosamond, riding, and the trotting on the gravel behind him made her light-thorough-bred plunge in a manner that would have unseated a less experienced rider; and yet, as Allan told himself, in those old days at Drydd she had never even been on the back of a donkey!

However, she evidently had had it in her to be a most accomplished horsewoman. It was only latent, like a good many other things.

She had already sprung to the ground when the dog-cart dashed up to the door, and she received them on the steps, looking charming in her well-fitting blue habit.

Beside her stood a big collie dog, no other than "Laddie."

She had not got rid of him thought Allan, which was strange; and, stranger still, Laddie knew him.

He accosted him with a loud bark, and sprang up on him with every appearance of delighted recognition.

"Down, Laddie! down!" cried Rosamond, raising her whip. "I never saw him to do that to a stranger before. One would almost fancy that he knew you," laughing.

"Almost?" returned Allan, laconically, following her into the hall, and thence into the drawing-room, where Mrs. Brand and Amy were entertaining a roomful of company to five o'clock tea.

Lord Kingsford was received with effusion by the hostess, who made room for him on ottoman opposite to her, and Rosamond found a low chair pushed forward for her use by a tall, fair young man, one of her avowed admirers.

There were half-a-dozen other people present, chatting in groups.

A heavy-looking dowager shared the sofa with Mrs. Brand—a lady who lived on gossip—who was delighted to meet the new Lord Kingsford, and thirsting to question him about his wife.

"What a sweet little boy that is of yours! I saw him out on his pony yesterday," she said, when she had got an opening, in a high, reedy voice. "I hope you have a satisfactory nurse?"

"Tolerably, I believe, thanks."

"Did you engage her yourself?"

"Yes," wondering what on earth she was driving at.

"I suppose she had first-rate discharges?"

"Yes, fairly good."

"Only fairly good?" aghast.

"Well, I suppose they were the usual thing."

"One cannot be too careful, especially a young man inexperienced like you, Lord Kingsford, in selecting a nurse for a motherless child," said the old lady, impressively.

"Yes, yes, of course, I know that; and I chose this woman for her face; that goes a long way with me."

An awful pause, and then Mrs. Brand said, indulgently—

"I'm afraid it does with most young men but," in answer to a violent nudge from her companion, "I think a pretty young girl is not suitable for——"

"Who said she was a pretty young girl?" interrupted Lord Kingsford, indignantly. "I'm sure I did not! She's as old as the hills, as old as you are, Mrs. Brand." (Mrs. Brand did not quite like this).

"You fancied that I was looking for a good-looking young woman! Honi soit qui mal y pense.

"I was thinking of an elderly person, with a good countenance, who would be likely to be kind to the little chap."

"It is very few fathers who make as much fuss about a child as you do, Lord Kingsford," said Mrs. Brand, soothingly; "and I'm sure it says a good deal for you.

"Another young man would pack the boy off to live in some family till he was old enough to go to school, and amuse himself about the world as a bachelor."

"Yes," returned Lord Kingsford, abstractedly.

"I suppose his mother died when he was born?" said the heavy old lady, in a low and semi-confidential tone of voice, looking at him sharply. "In such cases very often the child is greatly disliked. I knew an instance in my own experience where the husband has never looked at the child to this day, and swears he never will. Your—I mean Lady Kingsford—died in the same way, I suppose?"

"No," hastily glancing at his wife, who, looking in the best of health and spirits was gaily conversing with the fair young officer, brushing crumbs from her habit with her whip, and yet managing to take in the drift of the conversation between Lord Kingsford and two old ladies, "no, nothing of the kind;" and, seeing they were both about to plunge at him open-mouthed with legions of commiserating questions, he added, very gravely, "I never speak of my wife; it is a painful subject."

"Oh, of course, of course; we can understand that. What, are you going so soon?"

Allan remarked to himself that he should rather think he was going; he was not inclined to allow himself to be cross-examined by these two old scandal-mongers.

Goodness knows what they would ask next; and, having promised to dine at "Violet Hill" on an early day, and taken leave of Amy and Rosamond, he got himself safely out of the room, and was soon bowing homewards.

"He has a look of Allan," said Rosamond to herself, as she divested herself of her riding habit, and let down her long hair over her shoulders and prepared for dinner. "Yes," speaking to herself in the glass, "it is a strange resemblance, but not so strong as it was the first day, I am thankful to say. That struck me in a manner that was quite painful, that absolutely haunted me. I wonder very much," addressing her reflection, as she slowly twisted up her great coils of golden grown hair, "I do wonder, and I'm not often inquisitive, what is the mystery about his wife?"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE archery ball was a great feature in society in the neighborhood of Armine Court.

There was not much archery, it is true, but old traditions were kept up, and this was quite one of the best, if not the best, county ball, and was always well attended.

People brought immense "house" parties from long distances—the band and the supper came from London.

It was held in the local town-hall, and no expense or trouble was ever spared to make it a thorough-going success.

Of course the Brand family went to it, and so did Rosamond and Amy—Rosamond in clouds of pale blue tulle, over blue silk, caught up with pale pink roses—a French costume, the prettiest in the room, and probably the most costly.

"See what it is to be rich!" said Amy, with an envious sigh, as her friend came into the room just before they started. "What a perfect frock!

"The roses look like real roses, the body fits you like a glove, the skirt hangs just as it ought to—just clears the ground, and what sweet blue shoes and blue silk stockings!"

"You look just as well in your own way, Amy. That white dress of yours is very fresh and becoming."

"Yes, yes," discontentedly; "but it's not like yours."

No; no more than her face was like that of the beautiful wearer of the blue dress, who was to her as the sun is to the pale moon, and who eclipsed her little friend wherever she went.

"I do hope Lord Kingsford will be there," said Amy," as she fastened her glove, "and ask me to dance."

"I suppose he will," said the other, coolly. "But why are you so particularly anxious?"

"Oh," blushing, "I think he is so awfully nice; just the nearest thing I have ever met to my beau ideal," looking rather conscious.

"You have had so many beau ideals," said her friend, smiling; "at least six since I have known you."

"Well, at least you must admit that you have seldom met with any one as nice in every way as he is," with a pout. "He might even please you, who are so hard to satisfy—only," with a little malicious laugh, "for a wonder, he does not seem to like you. Most extraordinary, is it not?"

This same and very novel experience had occurred Rosamond herself; so she merely colored and said nothing.

"Yes, my dear: I see you noticed it, too. It was so odd, the night he dined here he never spoke to you. I remarked it; and when you came near him he moved away. And yet, strange to say, I observed him watching you latently several times when you could not see him.

"Such a strange look! I could not understand it, and when you sang he sat in rather an out-of-the-way chair, with his back to the light, and you sang that song, 'Then you'll remember me.'

"I could feel somehow—I can't explain—that it affected him, not to tears, of course, but he looked as if his mind was very far away, and his thoughts were sad. I have a theory about him and you. Would you like to hear it? Quite a romantic theory, too!"

"I would like you to hurry, my good girl. What ages you have been with those twelve-button gloves! I call them a sinful waste of time."

"I think, Rosie, that you must be very like his wife that is dead, and that is the reason he always keeps away from you: and yet, in spite of himself, he cannot help looking at you, when he can do so unnoticed. What do you think?"

"Perhaps so," returned Rosamond, advancing to the cheval glass for a last fond look, and arranging her necklet.

"She must have been lovely if she was you, Rosie," said Amy, contemplating her friend, gravely. "You are far the prettiest girl I ever saw; and you hold yourself so well and have such a pretty figure!"

"I feel quite set up in compliments for the whole night," returned Rosamond, laughing. "I know I am what is called 'fair to see,' but some way or other, strange as it may seem, I care very little for my pretty face. There was a time when it was different."

"And when was that?" inquired Amy, eagerly, for Rosamond, the most generous, and good natured, and unselfish of girls, was very close about her own feelings and her own affairs.

"Never mind, dear," kissing her, "there's the carriage coming round on the gravel. We must be off. You know how Colonel Brand goes on if the horses are kept waiting! A bear was a joke to him!"

In this instance the horses were not long detained, and soon the little quartette were stepping out of the town-hall, which was already crowded, and the band was playing the third dance as they entered the room.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A FATAL DOWER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HIS WEDDED WIFE," "LADYBIRD'S PENITENCE," "WE KISSED AGAIN," "ROBIN," "BUNCHIE," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII—(CONTINUED.)

FRANK GREVILLE had never for a moment wavered in his assurance that he had never seen Sibyl Rutledge after he had seen her leave the hall with Stephen; and in this he was evidently sincere.

That she had returned home the servant's evidence had proved at the Coroner's inquest, and that she had fled was beyond a doubt.

Conjecture after conjecture passed through Stephen Daunt's brain, following each other almost as rapidly as the train sped through the wintry-looking country in the stormy blustering March night.

The moon was at its full, shedding a flood of silver light on the bare trees, which spring had not yet begun to clothe with her tender green dress, on the quiet houses and deserted fields.

Ever and again a cloud blew across her silvery face, blotting it out for a few moments.

As the cloud which had obscured her scudded onwards again, she shone forth once more in all her beauty.

It was in the darkest hour—that just before dawn—that the train glided into the station at Paddington.

Stephen's eager eyes peering out into the station saw Lloyd Milner waiting there, wrapped in a long ulster, his face fresh and unwearied, as if he had not spent the day in harassing work and the night-hours in useless conjecture.

"You got my telegram?" Stephen said, as they shook hands and stood for a moment together in the bleak bare-looking station. "But that is a useless question. Of course you did, since you are here. Did you ever find out for me what I wanted to know?"

"Yes," answered the young barrister, in his usual quiet tone. "We leave Charing Cross at nine. It is now four," he added, taking up Stephen's heavy travelling-bag. "Shall we drive straight there and get a bath and breakfast at the hotel, or will you prefer to go to bed for a few hours?"

"We will drive to Charing Cross," Stephen answered.

The next minute they were driving through the quiet deserted streets of the great sleeping city, and Stephen was telling his friend of the note he had received and the urgent summons it contained.

"Unless I am greatly mistaken, the mystery will soon be solved now," Lloyd said thoughtfully. "I cannot think how we have all been so dense as not even to suspect the truth."

"We seem to have taken poor Greville's guilt for granted," remarked Stephen sadly. "Lloyd, what a terrible fate his has been, to lose all he held dearest on earth and to live a dog's life so long!"

"According to all accounts, he did not prize what he lost, so much as you think he did," Lloyd Milner returned drily. "If you will persist in believing in his love for Sidney, I think she herself has long ceased to do so.

"A man who passionately loves the woman he is engaged to is hardly ready to run away with another."

"It was a momentary infatuation," said Stephen gravely. "I think in his heart he always loved Sidney best. And that is not so much the question as her love for him."

"You know my opinion on that point," Lloyd answered coolly. "Your wife has cared for you for a long time now, even if she has not always done so, which I rather doubt."

"She loved me, and believed me guilty," said Stephen bitterly and incredulously—"perhaps believes me so still!"

"And loves you notwithstanding her belief. I think even you, Stephen, will hardly quarrel with such a love as that."

The tidal train to Folkestone carried no more eager travelers on that March morning than Stephen Daunt and his friend, and all through the rough passage across the Channel they smoked their pipes on the deck of the steamer, to the envy of the rest of the passengers in the agonies of mal de mer.

And soon after mid-day they were on their way to Paris, flying through the uninteresting country at a steady speed, which, if not quite so swift as the express they were most accustomed to, yet took them rapidly towards the gay and brilliant city whither they were bound.

"We will not wait to rest," Daunt said, when they alighted from the train on arrival. "We had better go at once to the address she has given us. There is not much time to be lost, and Heaven grant that we may not be too late!"

The driver of the fiacre looked somewhat puzzled when Stephen gave him the address which Sibyl had written with such a trembling hand.

With a shrug of his shoulders, he drew away along the gay boulevards, with their light-hearted promenaders, passing the cafes already gaily lighted up and full of careless idlers, the gay and tempting shops.

The two young men were very silent. Stephen's thoughts had wandered back to his last visit to Paris with Sidney.

They had then been only a few weeks married, but already the estrangement had begun which had gone on increasing until now there was a gulf between them which apparently nothing could bridge over.

Ah, would the time ever come when the husband and wife would be to each other all that marriage meant them to be, when they would be all in all to each other?

Lloyd had, in his intense interest in the object of their visit to Paris, forgotten all else.

Even his blue-eyed little sweetheart, the thought of whom was generally paramount was not remembered now.

For many long weeks he had brooded over the thought that Sibyl Rutledge had much to do with the mystery of the murder, and his disappointment at the result of their search for her had been very bitter.

Now he felt assured that the mystery would be solved at last and Frank Greville's innocence proved.

If it were not so, he was ready to believe in his guilt against all the most solemn protestations of innocence the unfortunate young man could make.

They had left the gay boulevards and shining cafes and glittering shops far behind them now, and were making their way slowly through a part of the brilliant French capital where few visitors go, and where the working-class chiefly preponderates.

Even here, though there was evident poverty, it was not such squalid and terrible poverty as that seen in many English great cities.

Many faces were gay and good-humored and smiling, and in some of the windows were white muslin blinds and here and there a flower.

They were going slowly now and stopping often, for the coachman did not know his way, and had to make many inquiries and to receive many and varied directions, in pursuance of which they at length found themselves driving slowly down a long narrow street where the houses were less lofty than any they had yet seen.

At one of these the fiacre was pulled up, and both young men jumped out.

Almost simultaneously an elderly woman, wrinkled and worn, but bright and clean in her white cap and apron, appeared at the door and looked doubtfully at the two young men.

"There is an English lady here very ill?" Stephen began huskily, when she interrupted him, saying with a keen glance at his face—

"Not an English lady, monsieur. There is a French lady ill here, who is expecting the visit of one English gentleman, but not of two, monsieur," she added.

"She is expecting me," Stephen rejoined quietly, hiding his surprise at the old woman's answer. "My friend will wait."

"Perhaps monsieur will step in here," she said, opening the door of a neat little room on one side of the passage, and civilly motioning to Lloyd to enter. "You, monsieur," she added, "will have the goodness to follow me, if indeed"—she glanced at him almost mistrustfully, "you are the person madame expects."

"I am the person, I assure you," Stephen answered earnestly. "I would not deceive her for the world!"

"It would be cruel to do so," she replied, leading the way upstairs, "since she has been so anxious for your coming, and she was afraid she would die before you got here."

"Is she so ill?" Stephen inquired in a low voice.

"Ill, monsieur! She is dying!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"SHE is dying," the old French woman had said, shaking her head as she preceded Stephen Daunt up the steep carpetless stairs.

As soon as the door of the room was opened, the young man saw that she had not exaggerated in thus speaking, for the face which met his eyes was the face of a woman whose days—nay, whose hours were numbered; and it was the face of Sibyl Rutledge.

She was lying wearily back on the pillows of the white bed, by far the most important piece of furniture in the room, which, although bare and poor-looking in the eyes of the young Englishman who had been used all his life to luxury, was exquisitely clean and neat.

On a table by the bed a bunch of violets made a little spot of color and sent forth a fresh sweet fragrance.

Never again would Stephen Daunt see those flowers or inhale their sweetness without recalling that scene, the bare clean room, the white bed, the beautiful still face upon the pillows.

For Sibyl Rutledge was beautiful still, even now, when every shade of color had died out of her face for ever, when the fair cheeks were hollow, the beautiful eyes sunken, when the golden hair, pushed back from the blue-veined brow and falling in matted clusters round her, was damp and very dark with the great drops of agony. Yes, even now she was very beautiful—such beauty as here death itself could not destroy.

Her eyes were closed, and the long lashes rested on the colorless cheek.

She did not move at sound of the opening door, she did not open her eyes; and, standing on the threshold, Stephen drew back slightly in sudden fear. Had he come too late? Was she dead?

The old Frenchwoman saw the movement, and gave him a little reassuring nod as she advanced to the bedside.

"She is often thus," she said. "She is so weak, the poor child!"

So saying, she bent over the beautiful still face, raised the heavy head on her arm and gently forced through the pale lips a small quantity of some cordial which stood at hand.

As it took effect, Sibyl moved slightly, and a distressed expression appeared upon the worn face, as if she were reluctant to come back to the life which meant only suffering.

The white lids were slowly raised, and the dim blue eyes which Stephen remembered as so lustrous, so glorious in their imperial beauty opened and looked up with a vacant unseeing gaze at the kindly wrinkled old face bending over her.

Stephen's own dark eyes were dim and misty at that moment.

Thinking of Sibyl as he had so often seen her only two short years before, his heart ached for her with a keen sorrow.

Standing there on the threshold of the little room where Sibyl Rutledge lay dying there passed before him, swiftly yet vividly other scenes in which she, in all her great and uncommon beauty, had been the central figure.

He saw her once again at the meet at which she had made her first appearance in public after her marriage, radiant in her beauty, proud, almost insolent her triumph smiling and brilliant.

He saw her moving in her queenly grace in her husband's sombre stately rooms, in the rich costly draperies of velvet and lace which seemed so pre-eminently suited to her style of beauty.

He saw her again as he had seen her on the night of the Hunt ball, in her glittering bride-like attire, surpassing all around her by her loveliness; and he saw her now—and this was the end!

No wonder that Stephen Daunt's eyes were dim with pitying tears as he went softly to the bedside and looked down at the wreck of so much grace and loveliness.

Slowly, with the same vacant sightless gaze, the heavy blue eyes moved from the woman's face to his.

As they rested there, there crept into them a look of recognition which might have been glad but that there was no strength for gladness, since, in the feeble attempts to raise herself from the bed and put out one thin hand towards him, she swooned and sank back fainting upon her pillows.

But the swoon was of short duration; her nurse had restoratives at hand, and recalled her back to life.

Now, as the dim eyes opened, there was entire consciousness in them, and she drank eagerly—almost with avidity—of the cordial which the old woman held to her lips.

"Raise me a little," she said faintly, speaking in the attendant's own language; and, when she was propped upon the pillows, she motioned to the woman to move away, and to Stephen to draw nearer the bedside.

He did so, and gently laid his hand upon the white thin fingers which rested so feebly on the cotton quilt.

"You have come?" she said, in a voice hardly audible even in the very quiet room.

"You knew that I would come," he answered, bending towards her.

"Yes," she whispered, closing her eyes for a moment to hide the great tears which welled up in them and rolled down the sunken colorless cheeks, "you were always good to me."

"I am grieved to find you so ill," he said compassionately. "Why did you not send to us before?"

"Because I thought that the nearness of death would make you pitiful," she answered, faltering between each word, and raising her eyes to his face with pitiful entreaty, "and now—I almost fear—it is too—late. I have no strength."

"You do not suffer?" he asked gently.

"No; I have no strength to suffer," she answered very feebly. "But—I am—dying."

"Can I do nothing—is there nothing to be done for you?" he asked, bending over her. "Have you had proper advice? Have you——"

He paused, glancing inquiringly round the room.

"I have everything I need," she answered, in the same faint halting manner. "I want nothing but rest, and I shall have that soon; meanwhile I must tell you—and it is hard—I am so weak."

She fell back upon the pillows with closed eyes for a few moments, her thin frail fingers still holding his, her teeth coming quickly and unevenly.

There was an oil-lamp burning on a side-table, and a wood-fire smouldering on the hearth.

The room was not cold, but very cheerless, and the shadow of death hung over it heavily.

Suddenly the dim blue eyes opened again, the white lips parting in an eager question.

"You are married?" she asked.

"Yes."

"To Sidney Arnold?"

"To Sidney Arnold," he answered very gravely.

"And—and you are happy?"

She had raised herself from the pillows in her eagerness, and the little thin hands had grasped his arm for support; but she did not wait for the answer.

"Yes, you are happy," she went on. "She is so good; but—does she love you as I loved you? Would she have sinned as I sinned to win your love? She is too cold, too pure for that!"

A little laugh broke from her as she fell back, a laugh horrible in its mockery to hear from those pale lips. Stephen Daunt drew back slightly. Was her mind wandering?

"You did not know that I loved you," she went on. "You cared only for her, which I—ah, Heaven, did ever any woman hate another as I hated her because she stood between me and your love?"

In utter silence Stephen looked at her as she lay panting and gasping, her blue eyes almost bright again in their hatred of the young wife he so dearly loved.

"I saw that you loved her," she went on breathlessly, "and it maddened me. I loved you; and I saw that she stood between us, and that she—she loved you too, although she did not know it herself; and I let her think—I made her think that you loved me and she engaged herself to Frank Greville in a moment of misery, thinking you were engaged to me.

"I knew—it all; he told me that—in his madness—he swore to kill—the man to whom I was engaged, and she believed it was you, and she won him over by a promise to become his wife if——"

Her weakness overcame her; she sank back, a gray ashen shade creeping over her face.

Stephen sat motionless, almost dazed by the sudden light her words shed over the past.

Was she right? Was it possible that Sidney had loved him all the time? In the sudden passionate joy which flooded his heart all else was forgotten—his mission there, and Frank's peril.

"It pleases you to think that?" she said faintly. "Have you never found it out? And yet she is your wife, sheltered by your love from every ill, cherished and beloved, while I—while I am dying here!"

She threw up her hands with a little broken cry, which made the nurse, who had withdrawn to an inner room, hasten to the bedside.

She muttered feebly in French that she needed nothing; and the old woman, with a pitying glance at her pale face and a deprecating look at Stephen, left the room.

"I hated her," she moaned—"hated her as I, who know how to hate, can hate. There was nothing I would not have done to make her suffer as I had suffered; and she was wretched.

"She loved you, but she had promised to become his wife: and then—I took him from her; and but for you I would have fled with him just to inflict upon her one pang—— Ah, you shrink, you think it horrible! But is there anything I would not have done to break her heart!"

"Hush, hush!" the young man broke in passionately. "It is indeed horrible—such unwomanly hatred cherished even now!"

"Even now that I am dying!" she said bitterly. "Ah, do you think that one alters then, that one gives up in a moment all the hatred of years?

"And yet, and yet I am going to atone, since you are here. Stephen, do not take away your hand. I—I—— Oh, it is terrible," she added, her voice dying away to the feeblest whisper, "to be so weak and to have so much to say! I cannot die—until—raise me—give me some fresh air—ah, Heaven!"

He raised her on his arm, and for a few moments she lay against his shoulder, panting and breathless, as if the end were near.

Then, when the paroxysm was over, her head fell heavily against him in utter exhaustion, and the ghastly face might have been the face of a dead woman for all the life it showed.

"Do not call," she whispered. "I shall not die until——"

There was the sound of footsteps on the stairs without; and the old French woman passed through the room and went out, closing the door behind her.

"They are here!" Sibyl said, raising her head. "I told—Louise to send for them when you came. Stephen, for Heaven's sake do not look at me so sternly! If I have sinned, I have suffered."

"I can see that, poor soul!" he answered huskily. "But others have suffered too, and cruelly. Sibyl, if you know anything of your husband's death, for Heaven's sake divulge it, for in the jail at Ashford Frank Greville is awaiting his trial for the murder."

The words seemed to galvanise her into new life; she sat upright, withdrawing herself from his support and staring at him with wild affrighted eyes.

"In prison for the murder!" she exclaimed, in a voice of horror. "I thought he was free! He is innocent—he is innocent!"

As the words left her lips she fell back

rigid upon the pillows in a dead faint, just as the old woman opened the door.

Seeing her condition, the nurse ran forward, while Stephen, staggering slightly and passing his hand over his dazed eyes and burning brow, went from the room out on the landing.

Three men were standing there. Two of them were strangers to Stephen; the third was Lloyd Milner, who, on seeing Stephen moved hastily forward, and, throwing open a window, admitted a keen blast of wind, which dissipated the giddy faintness which the long journey and fasting and subsequent agitation had caused.

When he turned from the window, which overlooked the quiet street, Stephen had recovered his wonted composure, and was able to understand Lloyd's hasty explanation and to acknowledge the informal introduction to the strangers, one of whom was an English doctor who had visited Sibyl, the other an English Government official, who was prepared to take down any deposition the dying woman might wish to make.

"Mr. Milner has given us an outline of the matter," said the taller, a handsome young man who wore a light overcoat over his evening-dress. "I sincerely hope that the poor creature may be able to clear your friend of such a charge.

"Every day," he added, with a slight laugh which jarred on Stephen after the painful scene from which he had come, "I am becoming more and more convinced of the smallness of the world.

"Frank Greville and I were at John's together, and left Cambridge at the same time. We have not met since then, but I hope now that we shall do so before very long."

A silence succeeded his little speech. Stephen had turned again to the window, thinking sadly of the broken life ebbing away in the inner room, and of the young wife he had left behind in anxiety and suspense, and his heart throbbed fast as he thought of Sibyl's assertion that Sidney had always loved him.

Could it be true? Was is possible that the dark cloud which had overshadowed them for so long was passing away, and that the golden lining would remain?

Could it be that out of a dying woman's confession, a confession of sin and guilt and misery and despair, happiness would come to him and to Sidney?

Even now he thought he saw it come smilingly towards him; and yet no—it was not possible! Had Sidney ever loved him, she would not have believed him guilty of murder.

Almost half an hour slipped by in silence; then the old woman came out of the room where Sibyl was, and motioned to Stephen to go in.

"She has not long to live," she said, wiping her kind eyes, from which tears poured plentifully; and a flush rose in Lloyd Milner's cheek.

"Ah, pray Heaven she may live to make her confession!" he thought sadly.

She had recovered entire consciousness when Stephen re-entered the room; but it seemed to him that her weakness was greater even than it had been before.

There was a hectic spot on either cheek now, standing out so vividly on the ghastly pallor of her face that it had almost the effect of rouge.

The window had been opened to give her as much air as possible, and she was wrapped in an old red shawl as she sat up among her pillows, looking eagerly towards the door.

"I am ready," she whispered hoarsely, holding out her trembling hands to Stephen—"but you must help me—I am so weak. Tell them to come in."

Grave enough now were the faces of the two men as they entered the room; and, as they passed in, the wild blue eyes caught sight of Lloyd waiting outside.

"There is some one else!" she said in sudden terror.

"Who is there?"

"Lloyd Milner, a friend," Stephen answered hastily, seeing her fear. "He is going to marry Dolly."

"To marry Dolly?" she repeated faintly. "Let him come in too. It does not matter, since you will hear it, who hears it."

Once more she seemed on the point of fainting; but she rallied, looking up at Stephen with piteous eyes.

"Oh, help me!" she moaned. "I am so weak, and I cannot die until—I have spoken. Can you not give me something?" she asked, turning her eyes upon the grave compassionate face of the doctor.

In silence he gave her some restorative, glancing significantly over at Stephen as he held it to her lips.

The glance was understood: it meant that whatever was to be done must be done quickly, or it would be too late.

Thinking of the innocent man in the jail at Ashford, it was small wonder that Stephen's voice was somewhat unsteady as he spoke, bending towards Sibyl, as she rested among her pillows.

"Can you tell us, Sibyl?" Stephen said, bending towards her.

"What?" she asked vaguely, as if she had already forgotten, the dim blue eyes raised vacantly to his face.

"The circumstances of your husband's death," he said gravely. "I told you that Frank Greville had been arrested on a charge of the murder."

"But he is innocent," she cried feebly, "because—I killed him."

The mystery was solved at last—what Lloyd Milner had suspected was true. Stephen, his heart beating fast, his hands trembling as he leaned towards her, said softly—

"How did it happen?"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A Race Against Time.

BY FRANK ARELL.

DREAMS ARE not always true.

Nor, on the other hand, are they always false—a fact within the observation, if not experience, of everybody.

Of course I do not refer to day-dreams, nor the fancies conjured up by a disordered stomach.

Let me transcribe a page or two of my own experience, and judge for yourself whether shadows of the impending future can be projected in dreams.

I had been stationed on the main line of the great Central Railway for something more than a year, attending to all the day and night duties at that point with such an unfailing regularity that no thought of possible accident had ever occurred to me.

The duties were not especially arduous, but the responsibility was far greater.

There was an express day and night, both ways, for which the main line had to be always clear; a local express each way, which ran on the turnout, and waited for the through train to pass; a mail train night and morning which had right of way; one ordinary passenger, and half a dozen, perhaps, accommodation and freight.

To see that the main line was always closed at the proper moment, that the turnout was always ready when it should be, that the branch where the local made up was open, and, in short, that everything was in condition for prompt and satisfactory working, kept me almost constantly at my post, though, as I have already said, the duties were not especially arduous.

In order to be handy to my business, I lived in a cottage close by, from the open door of which, looking eastward, I could see any coming train for a mile away, and notice whether the signal of "danger" or "safety" were in their proper positions.

One morning, just after the local had made up and gone, my wife came running to me with an alarmed face.

Our little girl was missing. She had seen her only a few minutes before the departure of the train and had made a hasty search for her as soon as she discovered her absence. She feared she knew not what.

I calmed her with a few brief words, and, hurrying around to the station-building, began a careful examination of every possible place where I deemed it likely the child might be. (She was only five years old.)

The search resulted in my finding her fast asleep on the sunny side of a pile of railroad ties, with her doll, half as large as herself, lying beside her.

That night I had a singular dream.

I thought I was in the middle of a vast plain, through which stretched, broad and clear before me, the double track of a main line.

Like ours, yet unlike, for every few rods I could see open switches and blood-red signals, that gave me an agony of apprehension.

As I looked again at the line, my eyes fell upon an object—a small form lying upon one of the rails. My child!

With a mighty effort I awoke, turned over, and went to sleep, and dreamed the same thing again, with the addition that I seemed mounted on a winged horse, and riding for life to close the switches.

Again I awoke, bathed in perspiration, and roused myself sufficiently to get up and visit my little darling's crib, of course to find her safe.

I walked the floor in my stocking feet for a while, looked at the clock, and again turned in, to dream for the third time the same thing; to start suddenly and broadly awake, as if the voice which roused the Thane of Cawdor had hissed in my ear, as in his,

"Sleep no more!"

To wake, and find the first gleam of the incoming day glowing grayly in the eastern wall.

However a visit to all those switches—mine, not those of the dream—a dash, head-foremost, into a cool, deep, running stream near, and a warm breakfast, seemed to clear away whatever remained of the lingering effects of my nocturnal visions, and I felt like myself once more.

Between the passage of the down mail which stopped, and the through express which did not, there was an interval of an hour and a half, that was essentially my own.

But that morning a despatch had come for one of the directors, who lived three miles to the south of us, and as it so happened, the agent, who was busy, requested me to take it, offering the use of his fast mare, which stood in harness under the shed—an animal remarkable for its speed and endurance, as I ascertain thereafter.

I had been to the director's house on one or two similar occasions, and neither the agent nor myself deemed the time necessary to go and come any consideration when an hour and a half was at my disposal.

Besides, had such a course been necessary, he would have taken the keys and acted for me. But there was no thought of that.

I drove leisurely over, enjoying the ride much, for the mare, "Fanny," was in excellent spirits, and the air was clear and bracing.

I had delivered the dispatch, received a brief word of thanks, and was already turning homeward, when the director came himself toward the paling, calling out to me by name. I reined up.

"There is some mistake here, Jennings," he said, with some excitement, waving the dispatch. "This should not have been sent to me, but to our agent." On reflection: "He knows the contents, I suppose?"

On reflection, I couldn't say, and so stated.

"Then go back to your post at once, and give it to him. A special train of excursionists for Hampstead Beach will pass at 9:30. Look out for it."

He turned leisurely and sauntered up the walk toward the house, while with a word I started the mare into a trot.

A special at half-past nine!

I drew a taut rein with my right hand, and took my watch from my pocket with my trembling left.

Nine twenty-two! Three miles of straight road—less, perhaps, a quarter of a mile of detour to the station, when I should reach the track—and the main line open to me westward for the passage out of the mail!

Three miles, and eight minutes in which to accomplish it!

In my youth I had known something about horses, and that knowledge did not fail me now.

I drew out the long whip—seldom used, as I have noticed—and touched the mare quietly on the flank.

How can I describe that ride?

I have been where charger met charger in the swirl and dust of battle, and men and horses have gone down together, but in that there was fellowship—association.

In this—but no words can fitly describe the fierce emotions of that solitary ride against time, where hundreds of innocent lives, all unconscious of the peril toward which they were speeding, hung trembling in the balance.

I recall now the tempest which swayed my shrinking soul, as, outwardly calm and rigidly erect, with every muscle strung as steel, I held the mare firmly up to her work, and, by voice and touch, electrified the noble animal with almost human consciousness of the necessities and peril of the occasion.

Trees, houses, fences, gardens—sometimes men, staring in wild-eyed astonishment—flew past in one unbroken flight.

My hat was off, my hair and beard streaming in the wind, my lips compressed, save when emitting low cries of encouragement to the noble mare; and thus I reached a low rise of ground commanding a view of the line for a mile or more on either hand.

Up to this moment from the time I had drawn taut rein and glanced at my watch, this point had been the objective goal for which I was riding.

If I could reach it before the whistle blew at the crossing below, there would be hope. If not—I shuddered at the alternative.

I recalled afterward, and many times, how a thought of my dream—a long line of switches—swept across me then! how my eyes for the first time swerved from their steady gaze at my horse's head, and flashed a glance up and down the whole visible line for the coming special!

Not in sight—thank God! Stay! there is smoke on the horizon.

But there is no stay in the wild rush of our onward course. With no unflinching nerve as when she started, the gallant mare stretches away down the gentle declivity, while every moment the distance lessens, and the on-coming train gets larger and nearer as it nears us.

I stand up in the wagon; I urge to greater speed; I wave scarf and hand; I shout, but my voice is beyond my control.

Ha! Joy unutterable! I am seen!

A whistle!—the agent runs out with a red flag! two whistles! Down brakes! The train is saved, and comes to a halt not a dozen yards from the open switch. It was time.

(Time—as they say in the racing-calendar—seven minutes and a half. This I confirmed afterward.)

I completed the last quarter of the detour to the station more leisurely, but am in time to receive from the arms of the agent my sleepy little girl, whom he had snatched from the shadow of that misplaced switch, where she was lying fast asleep, with her golden curls directly on the rails.

That dream again! Shall I ever be thankful enough?

I am an older man now, and have other and higher interests in railroads, but not in that line. That experience was too much for me. I left soon after, and my fortunes greatly improved.

My golden-haired little darling is now a woman, and happily married, and has a little darling of her own just beginning to walk.

And if you would like to see the gallant mare, Fanny, that won the race against time, and an affectionate place in my remembrance evermore, come out to the orchard, and you will see her enjoying a comfortable old age, petted and caressed by the whole family.

So I end as I began. Dreams are not always true. Nor, on the other hand, are they always false.

"YES."—A little rain, the sun again; a shadow; a summer day, some new-mown hay, a meadow.

A girlish face, a matchless grace, and beauty; we spend the day in making hay, sweet duty.

Some fading flowers, some happy hours, but fleeting; a week of rain, and then again a meeting.

One quick shy look, a rippling brook, some clover; a sky of gold, the story old, a lover.

A fair, sweet maid, a short word said; what is it? I try my fate, and not too late to miss it.

The years have gone, and still loves on that lover, he loves always, as days and days pass over.

A loving wife, a long, long life together, have made him bless that shy, sweet "Yes, forever."

Scientific and Useful.

FROST.—A remedy for frost bites is to rub the afflicted parts with pure oil of peppermint. It will also prevent the after effect of chilblains. Care should be taken to use only the pure oil, and not the essence of peppermint, as the essence will not have the desired effect.

CRAMPS.—Elevation of the head of the bed, by placing under each leg a block of the thickness of two bricks, is stated to be an effective remedy for cramps. Patients who have suffered at nights, crying aloud with pain, have found this plan to afford immediate, certain, permanent relief.

NEW GUN.—An Italian admiral has invented a shrapnel shell for the 100-ton guns. At thirty yards from the cannon's mouth it bursts, throwing forward seventy-five smaller projectiles, which in turn burst, strewing in fanshape a thick shower of balls and fragments with terribly destructive effect.

STAMMERING.—Stammering, as many sufferers have found, may sometimes be got rid of in a simple way. A correspondent writes: "I cured myself of an annoying habit of stammering by inhaling a deep breath between every few words, and by never allowing myself to speak unless the lungs were fully inflated. A little careful attention soon made the practice a habit and now I never stammer unless very much excited."

CRYSTAL ICE.—A new skating surface, called "crystal ice," has been invented in England. Considering that after all ice is merely a crystalline substance and that there is no lack of substances that are crystalline at ordinary temperatures, the inventor experimented with a variety of salts and after a time succeeded in making a mixture consisting mainly of carbonate and sulphate of soda, which, when laid as a floor by his plan, can be skated on with regular ice skates; the resistance of the surface is just equal to that of ice, it looks like ice, and indeed when it has been skated on, and got out up a little, the deception is quite astonishing.

ON MARBLE.—A process of engraving on marble has been devised in England. Instead of the costly process of engraving with tools a design reproduced from a cartoon, by this new process the artist draws with his own hand directly on the marble with acid, which eats away the surface, leaving the furrows, which are afterwards filled in with dark composition or color to bring out the design. The effect in the examples exhibited is said to be good, and the artistic advantage of drawing directly upon the marble, without the interposition of a workman's tool between the hand of the artist and the final result, is in itself an important advantage over and above the saving in time and labor.

Farm and Garden.

CHICKENS.—The most common diseases of fowls are catarrh and roup, and the diseases are nearly the same. In simple catarrh there is a discharge of watery mucous from the nostrils. In roup the discharge thickens and fills up the nostrils, the eyelids and the face become swollen and a foul odor is emitted. Remove the sick fowl to a warm, dry location, wash the nostrils with diluted copperas water and feed stimulating food.

MANURES.—All manures deposited by nature are left on or near the surface. The whole tendency of nature is to go down into the soil rather than rise from it. There is probably very little, if any, loss of nitrogen from evaporation of manure unless it is put in piles so as to ferment. Rains and dews return to the soil as much ammonia in a year as is carried off in the atmosphere.

TO MANAGE SHEEP.—Give the lambs a little mill feed in the time of weaning. Never frighten sheep if possible to avoid it. Some rye for weak ones in cold weather if you can. Separate all the weak, thin or sick from the strong in the fall and give them special care. If any sheep is hurt catch it at once, wash the wound, and if it is in fly time apply spirits of turpentine daily and wash it with something healing. If a limb is broken, bind with splinters tightly, loosening as the limb swells.

BUTTER-MAKING.—The foreman of an extensive creamery makes the following excellent suggestion for butter-makers: Cream can't swell in churning if it is shut away from outside air. There are two great mistakes made by dairymen—one that cream must be sour, and the other that it must be churned hot. Air the cream by frequent stirring, so that the oxygen of the air will ripen it; churn it revolving churns at about 540 or 550, and wash out the buttermilk with brine and not the color at the same time. These are the three great things for dairy people to know.

POTATOES.—A potato that has been greened in the sun is spoiled for eating, but for seed it is all the better. Such potatoes will be from a week to ten days earlier than others of the same variety planted at the same time. With late varieties they will produce a larger crop, as the growth will be more vigorous on the same kind of land. This secret of exposing potatoes to sunshine for a time before planting has been worth fortunes to the potato growers who learned it. It may be done with the bills selected for seed by partly uncovering the potatoes while still attached to the roots, taking care that it be done in not very hot weather, and that potatoes so exposed be dug before danger from frost.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

SIXTY-FOURTH YEAR.

SATURDAY EVENING, DEC. 6, 1884.

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THE HABIT OF THRIFT.

The habit of thrift and economy is good, but it takes a constant practice of generosity to prevent economy turning to meanness.

"Taking care of the pennies" is commendable. "A close buyer" is valuable in a business house. But people soon begin to credit him, nevertheless, with being a "hagg'er."

He gets the name before he is aware of the fact. Then people begin to treat him as if he were mean, and that makes it difficult for him to be anything else. He who looks for pennies, therefore, ought to give away the dollars. He who buys closely ought to deal liberally if he would save himself both from the habit and the reputation of being a mean man.

"Taking advantage when you get a chance" is a good rule with a mad dog or a March wind-storm. No doubt a man should let no good opportunity slip if it be honorable. But a fellow who gets his neighbor at mean advantage, and goes away laughing in his sleeve over it, is very likely to be watching for just such chances again.

He takes advantage of them so often that men naturally come to be on their guard against him. The result is, that he is generally forced to thrive by mean advantages, because no one dare offer to meet him openly.

It must really be hard work at first for any one who has been well raised to slander another with a mean speech. He must feel himself a coward. He has wounded his own self-respect, tarnished his own honor, lowered himself in his own estimation. This loss of self respect is the beginning of the habit of meanness.

"Look out for Number One" is a lesson which this world full soon and plainly enough, impresses on us all. As life advances, the watch-cry of caution gets new meaning every added day; and the more one has scraped together to look out for, the more the habit grows.

Number One is all right if you have a goodly array of figures on the other hand. Very rich men often become mean simply by the overgrowth of the sense of possession; they possess so much that the most familiar consciousness with them is possession.

The mind is like a piano; if you strike one key hour after hour monotonously, you will either drive yourself crazy or become so accustomed to it that you scarcely seem to hear it. So it is with the sense of ownership. It becomes second nature with a man; and he is himself too often unaware how morbidly selfish he is.

Fight the habit of taking mean views of your neighbor's actions or opinions. Give every man's honest creed your respect in all charity. Cultivate the habit of looking beyond your own particular party. By every large truth or generous idea that you can crowd into your own mind, try to stretch it.

It is astonishing how much elasticity there is in the mind of even the smallest nature. Fight the habit of meanness by abundant and, by all means, frequent giving. Compel yourself to say a good word of the man you dislike.

Mean men always look unhappy. You can detect their miserable, pinched, sneaking spirit in their faces. Even their own families pity them, fear them, and are ashamed of them; but they do not, cannot, really love them.

The mean man's joys are such as we could never for one moment desire—the delight of grudges, the pleasure of greed, the satisfaction of conceit and selfishness. Take him all in all, while he may not be the worst, he is certainly the ugliest, the most unwelcome of men. Nip the habit, therefore, in the bud: for, God helping us, we need none of us be mean.

SANCTUM CHAT.

GOLD coins are in local circulation which, although not counterfeit, are equally to be repudiated by all to whom presented. They have been depreciated by corrosive acids, and, although gold, every one of such coins has lost from 20 to 30 per cent. of their value, and cannot be cashed at the banks for their face. As far as known, this depreciated currency is in $5 pieces. They can be easily detected upon close observation, being lighter than the standard and more smooth over the surface, the action of the acids having cut down the sharply-defined embossing of both stamp and milling.

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OF all European countries, Germany is the country where suicide is most frequent, and in Germany, again, Saxony takes the lead. In 1872 the number of suicides in in Saxony amounted to 687 (366 to every 1,000,000 inhabitants). Last year 2,004 persons thus ended their lives. In England, in 1883, the suicides were 1,446 men, and only 519 females.

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EUROPE and British India consume about 150,000 gallons of handkerchief perfume yearly. There is one great perfume distillery at Cannes, in France, which uses yearly 100,000 pounds of acacia flowers, 140,000 pounds of rare flower leaves, 32,000 pounds of jasmine blossoms, 20,000 pounds of tube-rose blossoms, and an immense quantity of other material.

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IN Paris, where the papers have inaugurated a war on high prices for bread, and are driving the bakers to cheapen bread, several curious phases of the campaign have developed. In some places co-operative bakeries have been started, and some of the bakers threaten to strike and stop baking if the agitation is not stopped. The idea of a tradesman striking against the public is regarded as a new one.

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A CURIOUS sight has been remarked for a few nights past on the Boulevards of Boston. A close carriage has traversed the line of route most frequented by the public with its interior lighted up by means of electricity. On the horse's head there is also a small lamp of spray-shape illuminated by the same agency, the current being furnished by accumulators fastened under the vehicle.

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LADIES are now carrying the rage for harmonious dressing even to their note-paper, which must correspond with their complexion and hair. A few years ago the staple tints of fine stationery were white and cream, with a small percentage of lavender, azure, and a few others. Now there are about twenty-five standard tints altogether, while the number of shades given to each tint is without limit.

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THE simple making and selling of men's clothing is the greatest local industry in New York City. It employs nearly double as many people as any other single occupation, not taking into account the workmen who manufacture and finish the cloth. Inside the city limits about 900 establishments are devoted to the business, with an aggregate capital of about $25,000,000, employing 50,000 operatives, and paying out $15,000,000 a year in wages.

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UNTIL recently only pearls and diamonds were considered consistent with the spotless purity of a bride's attire, and in France even diamonds are interdicted as too glaring and showy, pearls being considered the only suitable jewelry for a young girl to wear at the altar. But an earl's daughter, recently married in England, wore a magnificent parure of sapphires and diamonds, which, of course, opens the door to any innovation upon old and unwritten laws.

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WHEN Edison, genius and inventor that he is, had given two weeks of his valuable time to going up and down the New York elevated railroad trying to discover what caused its noise and a cure for it, he gave up the job. Then a little woman took it. She rode on the car three days, was denied a place to stand on the rear platform, laughed at for her curiosity, and politely snubbed by conductors and passengers. But she discovered what caused the noise, invented a remedy, which was patented, and she was paid the sum of $10,000 and a royalty forever.

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A HOLIDAY was to have been given lately to the students of a college in Tennessee. The afternoon before the day one of the scientific professors noticed very alarming changes in the barometer. The sensitive instrument clouded up, showed great depression, and was in a terrible state altogether. The professor foresaw cyclones, and rescinded the order giving the boys a holiday the next day, postponing their proposed excursion. The next morning the sun rose on a balmy day, cloudless and mild. The boys, appreciating the situation, put on their rubber coats and boots, and attended recitations with umbrellas raised. They rushed through the soft sunshine as if pursued by howling winds, and shook themselves on entering the lecture rooms as if emerging from drenching rains. The faculty let the boys off, and the scientific professor overhauled his barometer.

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IT has been as good as decided that two million more voters are to be added to the franchise in Great Britain. It has also been settled to reform the districts from which members of Parliament are to be chosen. Under the old system a very few voters elected a disproportionately large number of members of Parliament, while great cities like London were most inadequately represented. In the United States we try and make each congressional district as nearly equal with other districts as it can be in population and number of votes; but even under the proposed reform system in Great Britain, one-third of the voters will choose two-thirds of the members of Parliament. But the tide of democracy is rising, and the two million of new voters will in time insist on a new distribution scheme, which will place all the voters of the realm on equality.

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THE popular libraries introduced in Paris have proved an immense success. In 1882 the first municipal library was founded, and two more were opened in 1865 and 1867, but as recently as 1878 there were only nine, while next year there will be forty. The total number of volumes is 100,247, the average annual increase being about 8,000. During the last twelve months 60,000 volumes were lent out. It is estimated that each volume was, on the average, read by five, making a total of 550,000 readers. Three-fifths of the volumes were novels, but it is noted as satisfactory that the demand for novels has not been nearly so great in proportion as for musical works, which show an increase of 68 per cent.; the demand for books in foreign languages has increased 61 per cent., and for works of history 43 per cent., the increase for novels being only 39 per cent.

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To those who carry on any operations requiring much hammering or pounding, a simple means of deadening the noise of their work is a great relief. Several methods have been suggested, but the best are probably these: 1. Rubber cushions under the legs of the work-bench. An English journal describes a factory where the hammering of fifty coppersmiths was scarcely audible in the room below, their benches having under each leg a rubber cushion. 2. Kegs of sand or sawdust applied in the same way. A few inches of sand or sawdust is first poured into each keg; on this is laid a board or block, upon which the leg rests, and round the leg and block is poured fine dry sand or sawdust. Not only all noise, but all vibration and shock, is prevented, and an ordinary anvil so mounted may be used in a dwelling-house without annoying the inhabitants. To amateurs, whose workshops are almost always located in dwelling-houses, this device affords a cheap and simple relief from a very great nuisance.

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AFTER depositing the outer garments in an ante-room of a St. Petersburg home, a visitor is conducted through the reception rooms, which often seem interminable, eight or nine in number, generally opening one into another. The inlaid parquets of the rooms are often very beautiful—the floor polisher is an important institution in Russia. Some rooms are richly carpeted, and do justice to the looms of Turkey and Persia. The silk or damask curtains, wall-hangings, and covering for the ottomans are superb. All is luxurious—vases of lapis lazuli, porphyry and malachite; pictures and objects of art in general are in profusion. The Russians are very fond of promenading through their suites of apartments, and ample space is left for this purpose. The winter being so long, every conceivable means are used to shed around the charms of warmer climates; trellises, along which various creepers are trained, are introduced; pretty baskets of plants (tulips, hyacinths and camellias in full bloom, while winter is still raging outside), the constant warm temperature indoors being favorable to their cultivation.

AMONG THE DAISIES.

BY HELEN ATTERIDGE.

Lay her down among the daisies,
With the fringes of her eyes
Softer than their silver petals,
Closed for blissful reveries.
Fold her little hands in whiteness
As in prayer on her breast;
Fear not for their folded lightness
On the heart unmoving pressed,
For that heart of angel brightness,
Tired so early, lies at rest.

Tired so early!—when the dawning
Glimmered white-winged through the room,
And the skies were half awaking,
Half in fading starlit gloom,
From the heaven of the starlight
Came the angels of the dawn;
And the morning winds were sighing,
And the curtains eastward drawn,
And her sleeping face looked brighter,
And a whispering sob said—'Gone!'

All the daisies were unfolding
In the fields, where never more
Shall the rapture of her child-life
Run in shout and laughter o'er.
Tired so early!—she has gathered
All her gladness in swift space,
She has sung her song and ended,
Childlike turning pleading face
Back to home when joys are weary—
Toward the one familiar place.

Lay her low among the daisies:
Angels knew her more than we;
They have led her home from wandering,
Tired with earthly revelry.
And above her daisied pillow
Let her simple tale be told:
Here the Lover of the lilies
Bade a little blossom fold;
He that wakes the flowers shall wake her,
White as snow, with heart of gold.

Shabby Clothes.

BY A. H. BALDWIN.

I AM always of opinion that if my friend Richard Watson was, as is agreed on all sides, disgracefully, shamefully, and abominably treated by Miss Agnes Lyall, he had, after all, nobody but himself to thank for it.

It was a little drama, serio-comedy, or tragedy—call it which you will—that was enacted in the lives of these two young people. All Watson's friends—with the exception perhaps of myself—consider that the lady was to blame; whereas the Lyalls to a woman maintain that Agnes behaved like a sensible girl, and that nobody ought to cast a stone at her for yielding to the unavoidable circumstances of her life.

The reader shall be the judge, and I will forthwith proceed to relate the little tale of Richard Watson's loves and sorrows.

Dick Watson was only twenty-two when he was lucky enough to be taken into his rich uncle's tea business as a managing clerk, with a prospect of eventually becoming a partner.

Some years ago tea was even a better opening for a young man than it is now, and Dick was considered a very lucky fellow.

It was only a small drawback indeed to the brilliancy of his prospects that he would have to work very hard for some time, and that, in accordance with the rules of the firm, he was to be shippedoff instantly to China, to learn his business thoroughly, and superintend things out there for the space of seven years.

Dick was perfectly content—was enchanted to be taken into his uncle's business—and did not in the least mind going to China.

He had his outfit to get in London, and then he went down to Yorkshire to spend his last fortnight of English life at the house of his married sister, Mrs. Harvey.

Up to this time no ideas of the softer sex, and no possibility of falling in love, had ever entered into his mind; but during that fortnight of idleness and rest he unluckily met with his fate.

He was not a bad-looking boy at all; smooth-faced and fresh-complexioned, with a little budding moustache and very neatly-arranged brown curly hair.

His mother had always looked after his clothes very carefully, so that his coats were well made and fitted him properly.

He was what might be called a neatly-turned-out young gentleman, wore stand-up collars and well-folded bird's-eye scarfs, and was irreproachable in the matter of gloves, boots, and hats.

The Lyalls lived half a mile across the fields from Mrs. Harvey's house, and Agnes had just come back from school at the time of Dick's farewell visit to his sister.

She was supposed to be out, and finished, and presented and whatever else is attributed to the adult young female when that mysterious period arrives at which she is pronounced to be a completed creature, and the male population is allowed to approach her with matrimonial intentions.

Agnes had two younger brothers at school, and then came Flossie, who was only a fat, pink-and-white-faced baby, much addicted to tears, jam, and dolls, and who was not considered of the slighest importance in the family, and of course counted for nothing.

Agnes was extremely pretty, and played croquet divinely—lawn-tennis had not then come into fashion—and the weather being superbly fine, and Mr. Richard Watson rather hard up for something to do, the two young people found themselves most days engaged upon fierce contests at that noble game upon the lawn of either one or other of the two houses.

When they were tired of playing they wandered off under the shade of the shrubbery, or into the kitchen garden together, where they either read poetry or ate strawberries, as the case might be, to their mutual satisfaction. The result might be easily predicted.

They fell, or were supposed to fall desperately in love with each other; and as Mr. Richard's time in England was by this time extremely limited, the declaration of love was necessarily followed almost immediately by a revelation of the fact to the friends and relations on both sides.

Then there was a great hullabaloo. The friends and relations objected strongly, and made themselves extremely disagreeable.

Neither Dick's mother and sisters—to say nothing of an elder brother whom he feared exceedingly—nor yet Agnes' father and mother, would at first hear of it.

Dick's relation thought it most undesirable that he should hamper himself with a wife just at the very outset of his career; and Agnes' parents naturally were strongly against her being tied down to a seven years' engagement when she was only eighteen, and might be reasonably supposed to be likely to have many more desirable opportunities of entering the marriage state.

Then the young people wept, and prayed, and entreated. They declared they should die if they were parted. They declared they were ready to wait, not only seven, but seventy years for each other, if need be.

They threatened to go in consumption, to develop cerebral complaints, to retire into lunatic asylums, and otherwise to make themselves into burdens and nuisances to their families, unless they were permitted to have their own way; and such were the harrowing pictures that they drew, and so great the despair and the laments that they gave utterance to, that they fairly bore down the opposition that was presented to them by the force of the very whirlwind of woe with which they overwhelmed their relatives.

So, to make a long story short, the engagement was settled and ratified, and received the sanction of the higher powers.

Then came the parting; floods of tears, agonies, and sighs, wringing of hands, solemn vows of fidelity, and promises to write every day (regardless of the mails) sheets and sheets of foolscap to each other.

The scenes that took place would fill a three-volume novel; but finally the lovers were torn asunder with the utmost difficulty. Dick was forcibly pushed into the train by his brother and brother-in-law, and Agnes fell back fainting in her mother's arms in the ladies' waiting-room at the station.

Everybody was thankful when the young gentleman was fairly off, and his ship had sailed at last out of Southampton Water, so that the inhabitants of the two neighbouring houses in the Yorkshire village had a chance of settling down again in the normal conditions of their lives.

For some time Agnes was very woe-begone indeed; she wept till her pretty eyes grew red and heavy, and lay awake sighing at night, until her bright color faded and her cheeks turned white and haggard; and she wrote—great Heaven! how she wrote!—all day long she was at it—scribbling incessantly—keeping a diary of all her thoughts and feelings, to send to her departed lover.

Sheets and sheets of octavo foolscap paper, quart bottles of ink, pens by the gross, all vanished in this great labour of love. She wrote till her head throbbed, and her back ached, and her fingers grew numb and stiff, and her mother really began to fear for her health.

"Leave it alone; she can't go on like that for seven years!" said her father. "It will cure itself!" and it did.

Agnes began by discovering that, as the China mails only went out once a fortnight, it was no advantage to Dick, and a great waste of labour a herself, to post letters every other day. After about a month, therefore, one very fat package only was despatched per fortnight.

In two months more she had made another discovery—the extra weight of each letter, which she had to pay out of her own pocket-money, cost her very dearly as much as a new pair of gloves.

This, when one has an income of two pounds ten a quarter to buy boots, gloves, and ribbons, became beyond a joke altogether. The foolscap paper was therefore abandoned, and ordinary foreign writing-paper took its place.

The next improvement in the condition of the forlorn and love-sick damsel was a very marked one. She went, or rather she consented to be dragged, to a ball.

She went, vowing that nothing should induce her to dance—that of course, as her mother made such a point of her going, she would go: but that equally, of course, she would sit by amongst the dowagers and look on at the other young people who were happy and had no burden of care as she had, and watch them all enjoying themselves—for how, she said, indignantly, could anyone expect that an engaged girl, whose lover was far, far away across the seas, working and toiling hard for his living, could go dancing and skipping about like a damsel who was heartwhole and had nothing but pleasure to think about?

In the first six dances she was as good as her word, and sat by her mother's side—the image of primness and sweet, sorrowful melancholy; but as she was the prettiest girl in the room, a great many men came up and asked her to dance. For some time she said "No" to them all; then, curious to relate, in spite of the heaviness of her heart, she began to find it a wee bit dull, and her toes began most unaccountably to beat time to the music, and there came upon her such a longing to stand up and be whirled round to the strains of one particular waltz, and she whispered to her mother:

"I wonder, if I took just one little turn, whether Dick would mind it very much if he knew?"

"I should think he would be pleased to think you were enjoying yourself, dear," answered her mother, with a smile. "You know you can't shut yourself out of society for seven years. I don't think Dick would be so foolish as to expect it."

"It seems dreadful of me to want to be gay, but still——" and then, a partner having presented himself in the very nick of time, Agnes smothered her self-reproaches and stood up and danced.

After that she never sat down again, but danced all the evening, and enjoyed herself very much indeed.

By the end of a year after Dick's departure Agnes Lyall had settled down again into a sensible, cheerful girl, with no sense of the tragic at all upon her mind, and no exalted ideas whatever upon the subject of faithful lovers who are parted.

She consumed no more paper by the ream nor ink by the gallon, but wrote her letter decorously once a fortnight as a regular duty not to be put aside or neglected; but still, more I fear as a duty than a pleasure.

Her letters, insensibly too, grew colder and more formal in their tone. The fever-heat of first love is difficult to keep up on paper; nor is it easy to fan the fires of passion with correctly-written and grammatically-expressed sentences.

Dick wrote to her regularly too; and as he found China very dull and his work extremely monotonous, his letters were considerably warmer and more enthusiastic than were hers.

It occasionally happened to Agnes that she missed a mail—very occasionally, it is true, but still it did happen once or twice; but Dick never missed one.

Meanwhile, she lived her home-life very happily and contentedly. She helped her mother in her housekeeping, arranged the flowers in the drawing-room, drove out to pay calls with her, and also she joined in every entertainment that went on with interest and pleasure.

There was not much gaiety, to be sure—only garden-parties in the summer and a few balls and Christmas gatherings in the winter; but Agnes never thought of declining to go to any of them, and seemed to enjoy everything that was going on quite as much as any other girl of her age.

Not only that, but it happened to her to have two offers of marriage—one from a neighboring clergyman with a good living, and one from a young officer quartered at the garrison town two miles off, whom she had danced with a good deal, and whom, but for Dick Watson in China, she might possibly have grown to like much better than she did.

Agnes was quite loyal to her absent lover in dealing with both these gentlemen.

"Oh! I am so sorry," she said to each of them, nearly in the same words—"so very sorry you should have made such a mistake! I thought everybody knew that I am engaged to a gentleman who is in China! We don't say much about it, because it is such an old affair; but everyone knew it, I thought! You must forgive me!"

The latter words were added timidly, not to the clergyman, but to the major, and were accompanied by a penitent and almost tearful glance of her pretty brown eyes; but she was stoutly true to her absent Dick, and had no real wish to be anything else but his wife when the time came for him to come and claim her.

Well, the years slipped away, as years do, and at last the time did come, and Dick Watson was expected home.

By this time he was thirty-one and Agnes twenty-five. She was still a very pretty young woman; indeed, in many ways she was far handsomer than at eighteen. Her figure had developed more fully, and her manner was more self-possessed.

She had lost some of the little failings of her early girlhood, and had gained a good many charms of more matured womanhood. Agnes Lyall was still the beauty of her native county, and was very much admired indeed.

But as for Dick, nobody knew in the least what he was like now.

Now, during these seven long years little Flossie Lyall had outgrown the bread-and-jam and doll period, and had developed into a very pretty, pert, and utterly spoilt young lady.

She was not so regularly beautiful as her elder sister, but she was infinitely more lively: and from having been petted and indulged in every possible way, was like nothing so much as a mischievous kitten.

Flossie was intensely interested in the approaching return of her sister's lover. She did nothing but talk about him—what he was like—what he would say when he arrived—what presents he would bring to his bride—and whether he would remember to bring any to his bride's sister?

These speculations became more and more frequent when it was known that Dick had actually started upon his return voyage, and that a letter announcing his arrival in England might be expected any day.

Mr. Richard Watson was coming home, according to the terms of his uncle's agreement with him, to develop instantly into a full-grown junior partner with a good share in the business.

He would consequently be very fairly well off and quite able to support a wife in comfort, and no doubt he was eager to be married as soon as he possibly could after his arrival.

His home-coming must have seemed to him to embody all his dreams of success and happiness at once—comparative wealth, and at the same time the realization of his faithful love, awaited his setting foot upon the shores of his native land.

Nevertheless, with all due allowance for his eagerness, I do think that he did a very foolish thing in writing home and commissioning his sister, Mrs. Harvey, to look out for a small house in South Kensington for him, and to proceed to furnish it from attic to cellar, so that it should be perfectly ready for him on his arrival; this commission was to be kept a profound secret from Agnes.

"I am anxious to get everything ready for her," he wrote to his sister, "so that there may be no further delay to our immediate marriage, and that she may find a home prepared for her reception the instant she becomes my wife."

Mrs. Harvey was unluckily a maniac upon furnishing; and the craze for dados and Chippendale chairs being at its full height, she was perfectly delighted at the opportunity of exercising her taste and of working out her pet hobby at somebody else's expense.

She no longer lived in Yorkshire near the Lyalls, but had moved to London, and she lost no time in taking the house and ordering in the furniture.

The first person of his acquaintance who met Dick Watson upon his arrival in London chanced to be my unworthy self—the writer of this tale.

I was walking down Piccadilly, thinking about nothing particular, when somebody came behind me and slapped me heartily upon the back.

"Hullo! old boy! Well this does feel like coming home! How are you?"

I turned round feeling rather sore between the shoulder blades, and found myself face to face with a great, broad, brawny-looking man, with a rough brown beard and very shaggy, unkempt brown hair, whom I did not at first remember to have ever seen before.

I looked at him doubtfully.

"Why, Tom, you don't mean to say that you don't know me? Why, I'm Dick Watson."

"My dear fellow!" I cried, grasping him heartily with both hands, "of course—how stupid I am! I know you by your eyes now; but for the first moment your beard and all that bewildered me. I am delighted to see you back! How are you—when did you arrive?"

"Half an hour ago from Southampton. Had a wonderful voyage—were in four days ahead of time."

"That's all right. Come and dine with me at my club, or"—with a rapid glance at my friend's garments—"at my rooms—that will be easier."

"Many thanks, old man, but it's quite impossible. I'm off to Yorkshire in half an hour. Have left my traps at the station, and am just going into a jewelry store to buy a ring for somebody—you know—and then I'm off."

I looked at him from head to foot. A more disreputable object I had seldom, if ever, beheld.

"You are never going up to Yorkshire to see Miss Lyall, as you are Dick?" I faltered.

"Ain't I though; as hard as ever the Northern express can take me! I haven't even telegraphed to her. I mean to take her by surprise. You may imagine that after seven years I am rather keen to see my little girl again, Tom."

I looked him over again in dismay.

He wore a rough brown shooting-coat of a very old-fashioned make, stained and threadbare; a vest belonging to another suit, which did not harmonize with the coat at all; a striped red-and-white flannel shirt, and pantaloons—but these I cannot even find words to depict—they were indescribable.

My eyes traveled upwards from cowhide boots of a colonial make to a wide-brimmed hat of the most alarming dimensions, and I literally groaned.

"You will change your clothes, Dick? Let me entreat you not to go and see Miss Lyall in those; they really are, pardon me, disreputable."

"They are the best I have," answered Dick, laughing; "and I might wait a week if I ordered new ones. I know I'm a little out of fashion; but Agnes, bless her, won't mind that."

"I don't know," I answered, doubtfully; "ladies think a good deal about dress. Could you not go and see your sister and consult her?"

"My sister is out of town—I had a letter at Southampton from her; besides, why should I delay?"

"You will at least get shaved, Dick?" I pleaded.

"Not I! I have been free of the razor too long to take to it again in a hurry. I must be off now, old man. Mind, you are to be best man, you know. I will take no denial as to that. I'll write to you from Yorkshire."

And waving his hand gaily to me, he was off, leaving me a prey to the most profound despair and the direst presentiments of evil.

The two sisters were sitting together in Agnes' little sunny morning-room. Mr. and Mrs. Lyall were both out. The bow-window commanded a full view of the drive up to the front door.

"What is Dick like?" Flossie was asking for the hundredth time; "do describe him to me, Agnes! What colored hair has he?"

"Brown," answered Agnes, smiling.

She was bending over some church embroidery she was working in a frame.

"Straight or curly?" pursued Flossie.

"Curly. It is very pretty hair. You have seen the photograph I have of him in the locked frame, Flossie, even if you don't remember him for yourself."

"How could I? I was such a baby! And he is very handsome, isn't he?"

"Oh, yes; Dick is decidedly handsome!"

"How I wish he would come!" sighed Flossie, who was idly balancing herself backwards and forwards on her chair. "How delighted you will be when you get that letter with the Southampton post mark, Agnes; and how wild with joy when he arrives!"

"I shall be very pleased of course," answered Agnes, soberly, and was silent for a few minutes.

She was revolving in her own mind what her feelings would be exactly when Dick—her own Dick—reappeared as a tangible reality of life after so many years of absence.

"I hope you will put on your new blue dress the day he is expected?" observed Flossie, presently.

"Very likely," said Agnes, smiling; "but I think the one I have on is very pretty."

"You look beautiful in anything, Agnes, darling!" cried the younger girl, "and a king might be proud of you always!"

And indeed, in the pearl-gray cashmere she wore, with soft, delicate lace at her throat and wrists, Agnes looked as she always did, not only lovely but perfectly well dressed and fit for any company.

There was a little silence. Agnes' needle clicked through the stiff canvas of her work.

Flossie's chair creaked somewhat disagreeably under her restless movements. Suddenly she exclaimed:

"Good Heavens! here comes the original scare-crow that accompanied Noah into the ark! Did you ever see such an object? Who can he be, Agnes?"

Agnes lifted her eyes from her work; a very rough-looking, shaggy-bearded man was coming up the drive.

"Some tramp, I suppose," she said, unmovedly, and resumed her work.

"What awful impudence; he is coming up to the front door!" cried Flossie. "Well, I do believe the brute is ringing the bell!"

"Perhaps he wants papa on business; however, James won't let him in."

The door-bell had rung, and a slight parley was audible in the hall. Presently James the footman put his head in:

"Please, miss, a—person—wished to speak to you."

"Oh" it must be for papa. James says he is out," said Agnes, looking up.

"No, miss; he says he comes to see Miss Lyall most particular; and when I said it were a mistake, he says, says he, 'Please tell Miss Agnes I wish to see her.'"

Agnes rose, but, looked a little troubled.

"It must be some begging person," she said. "Perhaps I had better see him: but mind you come in in five minutes, Flossie, for I don't want to be left long alone with that odd-looking man."

Flossie was not long. She opened a novel on the table, and began to read the first chapter, without troubling her head about her sister's visitor.

All at once she looked up at the clock, and discovered that Agnes had been gone for more than ten minutes; then she remembered her sister's parting injunction, and jumped up.

"Good gracious!" she cried aloud to herself. "Noah's scarecrow must have gobbled Agnes up! I had better go and see after her"

She opened the door, and to her dying day she declares she will never forget the sight that met her eyes. The scarecrow sat on the sofa by the side of Agnes, with his arm round her waist!

"Merciful Heavens!" ejaculated Flossie, standing petrified in the doorway.

Agnes struggled up from the sofa.

"This—is—Dick Watson, Flossie," she gasped.

"Why, it's little Flossie!" cried Mr. Watson, in a hearty knock-me-down sort of voice, "grown out of all knowledge. Come here, my dear, as you are to be my sister, and give me a kiss."

"No, thank you!" said Flossie, very deliberately. "I had rather not."

That was the first downright sheer the poor fellow received. He opened his eyes and looked from Flossie back to her sister. Agnes had gone to the window.

"Oh, here are papa and mamma!" she cried, nervously, "coming in from their drive. I will run and tell them you have come—and—it will be quite time to dress for dinner." And straightway the two girls vanished, and left him standing alone.

"For pity's sake go and tell them!" cried Agnes, wringing her hands in the hall. "Prepare them for what is there; send papa to him, and tell mamma to come up to me;" and then Agnes fled up into her own room and fell upon her bed in an agony of mortified tears.

"Nothing will induce me to marry him, mamma—nothing! Papa must tell him!"

"But, my dear, consider—the length of your engagement——"

"If I had been engaged to him twenty years I wouldn't marry him! Ay, Flossie called him a—a scarecrow! and I didn't know him one bit myself, and thought he was a tramp or a beggar! And he made me kiss him before I knew where I was. Oh——"

"But, Agnes, do remember how desperately in love you were—how you wrote to him when he went away.

"No doubt I was an idiot, mamma, but he wasn't the same man then. Did you see his clothes? Ugh! it makes me quite sick to think of them! And he hadn't shaved for a month, and looks as if he hadn't washed either!"

"But, my dear, he cant get himself shaved, and washed, and buy new clothes," remonstrated her mother.

"I should never—never recover from the revulsion and disgust. I feel now it's quite hopeless, mamma. Tell papa he must send him away—tell him I have changed my mind, for I won't leave my room until he has gone away."

And from this there was no moving her. Somehow and in some fashion Mr. Lyall did make the unfortunate Dick understand that Agnes would have nothing more to say to him, and that the engagement that had lasted so many years, and was so near its fruition, must be broken off.

So the house in South Kensington was put into agents' hands and was let furnished as it was, dados, Chippendale chairs, and all, and poor Dick gave up his partnership in London, and went back to China by himself, there to recover at leisure from his disappointment; and everybody said that he had been shamefully treated, and that Agnes Lyall was a horrible girl and had behaved disgracefully bad.

But I always maintain that had Dick taken my advice, and remained a few days in town to get himself brushed up and newly turned out before presenting himself to the lady of his affections, we might have danced at his wedding yet. The moral of it all is—avoid shabby clothes!

A Slight Mistake.

BY CHARLES REED.

IF Syra is as pretty as she was at six, be sure and send her to me to spend the summer. My husband's nephew, Eustace Gaynor, is here, and I should like him to make her acquaintance. It would be a good thing for Syra."

Thus ran the postscript of Mrs. Dora Smith's letter to her niece, Mrs. Lawton, who, seventeen years before, had married and left her home with an aunt to reside in the city.

Aunt and niece had been almost uninterruptedly separated since,

The letter found Syra Lawton at the end of her first season.

"Peach-cheeks" her father called her.

Her mother's title for her was "Rose-bud."

You would not have detected a flaw probably in the girl's health, after her season of dancing and late suppers. But there was a slight languor and indifferent appetite.

And then came Aunt Dora's letter.

"Just the thing?" said Mr. Lawton "Despatch Syra right off, Nellie. She has had enough fashionable folly for this year. Send her right up to Aunt Dora, among the blueberry pastures."

But Mrs. Lawton hesitated.

"I don't know as Syra would like it," she said.

She remembered the great kitchen at Oaklots, where most of her youth was spent, and it didn't seem likely that pretty Syra, playing waltzes with a dainty touch in the next room, would be contented there.

To be sure, Aunt Dora had a very, comfortable and pleasant house. But she was very decided in her opinion that girls ought to learn to be good housekeepers.

She made the whitest bread, sweetest butter and best jelly in the county.

She could do almost everything to perfection, and she had sent Nellie forth into the world almost as capable a housekeeper as herself.

But with Mrs. Lawton it was different.

Beautiful Syra had been too daintily kept to share in the labors of the house, where, in truth, household help was kept in such plenty, that soiling those little hands had always seemed superfluous.

But Mrs. Lawton knew very well that Aunt Dora would disapprove such "bringing up" of the girl, and her conscience reproved her that Syra, at sixteen, could not make a loaf of bread.

"It would be a good experience for her, for aunt Dora, though strict, was always considerate in her training. Syra has been to too many dances this winter. The air is splendid at Oaklots. She shall go," she decided.

Then the subject must be broached to Syra, with a certain tact, that the trip might prove a success.

"My aunt Dora wants you to come to Oaklots for the summer, dear—the most beautiful of all places, and father is very anxious that you should be in the country this summer. You remember Aunt Dora, do you not?"

"No; but I should like to go very much," said Syra.

"Papa will go up with you the first of next month; and the first of September, I will come up with the boys, make auntie a visit, and bring you home fresh as a rose and brown as a berry, I expect. But, Syra, Aunt Dora is very domestic, and will want you to learn the ways of a housekeeper and to assist her. I expect you will be willing?"

Syra said "Yes," lightly.

"She will want you to do things about a house, and do them very nicely. It will be good for you, the training; and if sometimes a little irksome, be patient and faithful, and try to please auntie, for she was the best friend of my girlhood. Will you remember this, my dear Syra?"

And Syra promised.

The gay society season was quite at an end, and in the strong suns of April, the girl imagined the country, of which she had seen little, would be beautiful.

The parks and public gardens were already bright.

She had a youthful love for such sights. She would have a delightful summer, she was sure.

But at the last moment, it turned out that Mr. Lawton could not accompany his daughter upon her journey, and Syra's mother could not go, for the two youngest boys were down with the measles; but the letter was already despatched, announcing Syra's speedy coming, so it was desirable that she set forth at once, and the girl declared she was not afraid to go alone.

"There is no change of carriages, my girl," said her father, as he snatched half an hour to see her start in safety. "'Twill go right through, and be at Woodville before dark; aunt Dora will have a carriage at the station, or, if anything prevents, take the mail-team—a very commodious vehicle, with a civil driver, who will pass her door on his way to the post-office. Now see what a little woman you can be."

And with a look of solicitude and a word of encouragement, he was off, and the train rolled out of the station, taking Syra upon her journey.

She had every essential for her trip, from her pretty travelling-suit to a well-packed lunch-basket, and a book for reading.

It was a bright spring day, and Syra, having had her ticket punched, and requested the guard to notify her when approaching Woodville, leaned back in her seat with a feeling of enjoyment.

She was naturally fearless, and enjoyed the enterprise of her trip alone.

At noon she ate her lunch, and commenced her book, which, diversified with watching the change of passengers, absorbed the afternoon.

But she was getting a little tired, when the guard, passing, said—

"Next station's Woodville, miss."

Syra roused herself and looked out at the window.

Lonely grey fields and no houses!

Ten minutes later she sprang out upon the platform, and looked bewilderedly about her.

The train rattled away.

The few persons who had alighted with her had disappeared, as if they had sunk into the ground.

There was not a form in sight upon the cheerless spot but a long, lank young man, who alighted from an old wagon and approached her.

"Be you Mrs. Smith's niece, eh? Well, then, I'll take you right up."

Syra had mechanically responded to his question in the affirmative, but when her uncouth escort would have gallantly taken her hand to lead her to the carriage, she drew back.

"In that?" she exclaimed, involuntarily. "I never rode in such a thing in my life!"

The young fellow looked from the dainty girl to the mud-spattered old wagon, and answered—

"Reckon ye didn't. But that's what yer aunt sent me in fur ye; and I reckon ye'll have to go in it."

For a moment Syra silently contended with her emotions.

She had expected her aunt in a comfortable family carriage to meet her.

Such a reception as this seemed little short of an insult.

But she remembered that she was quick-tempered, and tried to control herself.

She certainly preferred to think no offence was meant, and swallowing the rising in her throat, she walked to the wagon and climbed in.

"I'll bet she don't expect the likes of you," remarked the young man ambiguously, as he mounted to a seat beside her and jerked the lean old horse into motion.

Syra did not reply.

She was busy looking over the dismal landscape with a sickening heart—barren fields, leafless trees, small, poor, scattered houses, half hidden in the gathering gloom.

Spring came tardily among those New Hampshire hills.

She could see nothing green but her companion, who reminded her of Ichabod Crane.

"I know, 'cos I'm staying there a bit. I'm her nephew, yer see," remarked he.

Was this the young man her father had lastingly alluded to at parting, warning her to break no hearts before he saw her again?

She thought not.

Syra had never felt so utterly miserable in her life as then, while she jogged along the lonely, darkening, muddy road, replying in monosyllables to her companion's chat.

She saw that he was trying to entertain her, and though she considered him simply horrible, she at length tried to be correspondingly civil.

"Is Aunt Dora well?"

"Eh?" sharply.

"Is my Aunt Dora as well as usual?"

"I reckon she is. Never heard her called that before. However, I 'spose she is. Law! she don't have no time to be sick. I guess you'll find that out," meaningly.

At length they drew up before a low, unpainted, rambling, farmhouse, with shutterless windows, bleakly unsheltered under the cheerless sky.

Syra began to fear she should cry, and cleared her throat briskly.

The young man threw open the door.

"Walk right in. You'll find her."

Syra passed directly into a rude, unpainted kitchen as big as a barn, lighted only by a single small lamp.

A great dog growled inhospitably at her from some dark corner, and if poor Syra had known of any refuge she would have turned and fled from this accumulation of horrors.

As she stood silent in the gloom, a door unclosed, and a tall, scantily-dressed woman came into the room, and having both hands full deftly kicked the door together behind her.

"Eh?" she said sharply, advancing to a small, rickety table, and setting down a milk-pan and a plate of brown bread; "so you've come, have ye?"

"How do you do, auntie?" said Syra, forcing herself to approach the very unsavory-looking lady and kiss her smoke-dried cheek.

"I'm well," answered Aunt Dora, placing her arms akimbo and sharply surveying her little niece. "Well, of all things!" she ejaculated at last.

A feeling of faintness came over Syra.

She sat down, uninvited, and the very ugly dog came and smelled at her dress.

"I'd as lief you'd be ruggeder-looking," remarked aunt Dora drily, as she turned away.

Poor Syra!

She had a very hard struggle with herself not to break into passionate sobs; but at length she conquered, and clearing her throat, again attempted conversation.

"Did you expect me to-day, auntie?"

"Expect ye? Of course! I sent for ye."

"I know. Papa hoped to make the journey with me, but couldn't. But I did very well alone."

"Well, draw right up here, eat your supper, an' get to bed. I'll want you to help me to-morrow."

Quite quenched as to sociability, Syra took off her things, handing her pretty hat to her aunt, who surveyed the ostrich plume with curiosity and an audible sniff, took a seat at the rickety table, whereon was the sickly lamp, the milk-pan, brown bread, and some coarse bowls and pewter spoons.

"Take hold."

And, seeing that Syra hesitated, Aunt Dora filled a bowl with milk, broke a slice of brown bread into it, and pushed it towards the girl.

The lady's hands were very dirty, the bread was very sticky and peculiar in flavor, and Syra could only pretend to force down a few mouthfuls.

She was dizzy and faint, and would have given much for a cup of her mother's delicious chocolate.

Seeing that she did not eat, her companion suddenly presented her with a cup of very black-looking tea.

"I 'spose yer tired," she said, not unkindly.

"Yes, aunt, I am very tired. I'll go to bed at once, if you please."

Mrs. Dora rose with an energetic alacrity peculiar to her, and, seizing the lamp, led the way up a cold, dark stairway to a bedroom, with damp, bare, white walls, and a great feather-bed, piled with home-made quilts.

She set down, with no apparent idea of giving offence, watched Syra undress, openly examined her skirts and stockings, and when the girl had shiveringly crept into bed between the sheets of ice, took the light away.

"I'll call you in the morning," she said.

If the evening had been unpleasant, the night was a torture.

It seemed to Syra that she would perish with cold and dread of her forbidding surroundings.

At ten o'clock she heard her male companion come stumbling up the stairs and retire upon a creaking bedstead somewhere in the neighborhood.

But not one moment all night did she forget her sufferings.

Just before dawn she lost consciousness of her misery, when a rude hand grasped her shoulders.

"Good gracious! This is a pretty beginning! Going to sleep all day? It's past five o'clock. I've called ye twice!"

Poor Syra started giddily up in the grey light in amaze.

At home she often lingered on her luxurious pillows after the bell had sounded a quarter to seven through the summer warmth of the furnace-heated house.

Such a terrible day as that was.

Mrs. Dora instructed her, in as few words as possible, in washing a stack of milk-cans and pans, and the soft-soap and scalding water were anguish to her tender hands.

Then she was set to paring apples for pies, until an indelible stain of apple-juice was set in the poor little fingers, which she regarded so ruefully that Mrs. Dora took notice.

"Oh, ye can't keep yer hands white here! I didn't get ye for that."

Poor Syra!

She stumbled about in her aunt's long calico dress, mixed brown bread and "ginger cakes," ironed, swept, scoured knives and forks, brewed yeast and churned.

She could not eat the breakfast of salt fish and potatoes, or the dinner of fried pork and eggs, the latter being cooked to the consistency of sole leather; and, trembling with fatigue, she was at length caught with two big tears rolling down her cheeks.

"For pity's sake!" exclaimed Mrs. Dora. "Don't know nothin', an' don't eat nothin', and now cryin'!"

Syra sank into a chair in a tempest of tears.

"Oh, I can't help it. I'm so tired—and so—so ill."

Voices outside the door—a knock.

There was Mrs. Dora's nephew; a tall, stout girl, very bashful; a carriage containing a sweet-faced elderly lady, and a pleasant young gentleman.

"How do you do, Mrs. Smith?" said the former. "There has been a mistake. I expected my niece last night at the station. My nephew was a little late for the train, and did not find her. This morning's express brings this—your niece. Is mine with you?"

Mrs. Smith nodded.

"Law sakes!" she said, turning to Syra. "So that's your aunt—Mrs. Dora Smith, of Oaklots—rich folks! I'm Dorothy Smith. I thought it queer my sister should send me such a weak thing as you are."

Syra waited to hear no more.

She tore off Mrs. Dorothy's calico, hurried on her own things, and ran out to the carriage.

"Why, my darling," cried sweet Aunt Dora, and Syra clung speechlessly to her for a moment, "I couldn't sleep last night for worrying over why you had not come, and Eustace here was up bright and early to be on hand for the morning's express. He found that young woman, whom he was sure wasn't you, inquiring for Mrs. Smith, and the station-master told a strange story of a very pretty girl riding off with Joel Smith last night."

"So glad we have found you," said nephew Eustace to Syra with the kindest of reassuring smiles.

Syra's journey was at an end.

It was delightful at Oaklots, Aunt Dora the wisest and dearest of teachers and friends, and when mamma came up in September, she was not displeased that there was a diamond engagement ring on her daughter's little hand.

LUCIFER MATCHES.—According to a German paper, the inventor of lucifer matches was a political prisoner who perfected his idea in 1833, within the walls of a State prison. Kammerer was a native of Ludwigsburg, and when sentenced to six months' imprisonment at Hohensapeg, he was fortunate enough to attract the notice and gain the favor of an old officer in charge of the prison, who finding he was studying chemistry, allowed him to arrange a small laboratory in his cell.

Kammerer had been engaged in researches with a view of improving the defective sleeping system, according to which splinters of wood, with sulphur at the ends, were dipped into a chemical fluid in order to produce a flame. If the fluid was fresh the result was satisfactory, but as it lost its virtue after a time, there was no general disposition to discontinue the old-fashioned system of using flint and steel.

After many failures Kammerer began to experiment with phosphorus, and had almost completed his term of imprisonment when he discovered the right mixture and kindled by rubbing it against the walls of his cell. On coming out of prison he commenced the manufacture of matches. Unfortunately, the absence of a patent law prevented his rights from being secured, and, on Austrian and other chemists analyzing the composition, imitations speedily made their appearance. In 1835 the German States prohibited the use of these matches, considering them dangerous.

When they were made in England and sent to the Continent these regulations were withdrawn, but too late to be of any benefit to the inventor, who died in the mad-house of his native town in 1857.

IN THE WEBB.—A traveler in the tropics thus describes a terrible fight between two spiders: "One had a small web against a wall, and of this web the other coveted possession. After vainly trying, by a series of strategic movements, to drive out the owner, it rushed on to the web, and the two envenomed little duelists closed in mortal combat. They did nothing so vulgar and natural as to make use of their lances, and never once actually touched each other, but the fight was none the less deadly. Rapidly revolving about, or leaping over, or passing under each other, each endeavored to lasso or entangle his adversary, and the dexterity with which each avoided the cunningly thrown snare, trying at the same time to entangle its opponent, was wonderful to see. At length, after this equal battle had raged for some time, one of the combatants made a momentary mistake, and for a moment there occurred a break in the motion, and the other perceived its advantage, and began leaping backward across the struggling adversary with such rapidity as to confuse the sight [illegible] of two spiders [illegible] between them. He then changed his tactics, and began revolving around and around his prisoner, and very soon the vanquished weaker one succumbed, let us hope, in the interests of justice was speedily wrapped in a silvery cocoon, which it was the custom the victor to weave for itself, was also its winding sheet."

A PARISIAN doctor prescribed for a lady who had objections against growing stout: "Take exercise, my dear lady. Consider the trees of the field; they never take exercise, and as a consequence, they go on growing bigger and bigger every year."

It Will Cost You Nothing

To get an honest medical opinion in your case, if you are suffering from any chronic disease, as Consumption, Neuralgia, Catarrh, Rheumatism, etc. Drs. Starkey & Palen, 1109 Girard street, Philadelphia, who are making wonderful cures with their Compound Oxygen in all forms of chronic diseases. Write to them and give a clear statement of your case. They will answer promptly as to your chances of relief under their Vitalizing Treatment. It will cost you nothing as the largest [illegible] consultation. It, however, you decide to [illegible] them [illegible], in a personal [illegible] for their pamphlet, in which you will get a history of the discovery, nature and action [illegible] new [illegible], [illegible] and a large [illegible] testimonials. [illegible] with this notice [illegible] kindly remembering your own.

POLITICS AND POWDER.

What It Costs to Run a Campaign—Opinion of a Fireworks Maker.

[Rochester (N.Y.) Democrat.]

"Five million dollars!"

"Yes, sir, five million dollars, of which two millions are spent for fireworks and three millions for uniforms, etc., every presidential campaign."

Thus said Mr. James Palmer, the Rochester fireworks maker, to our reporter's inquiry.

"The average spent in off years for fireworks is over one million dollars."

"Do we import the bulk of our fireworks?"

"No, sir, we import nothing but firecrackers. We make the rest in this country. There are only ten fireworks establishments in America."

Upon invitation of Superintendent Frederick Fitz Fichner, the reporter inspected the Palmer establishment not without some fear and trembling at first. When the superintendent said he had been blown up twice, the reporter furtively asked:

"Is not this business a little risky?"

"Yes, I suppose it would be so considered by outsiders, but I have encountered greater dangers than any I find here and don't feel concerned."

"I don't quite catch your meaning?"

"Well, I have been in this business many years and the constant though unconscious nervous strain has caused greater suffering than the explosions I have "taken!" Many a day I would be very dizzy, and everything would get dark. At other times I could scarcely breathe from choking sensations. Then my appetite left me and I grew thin, weak, and lifeless. I was drowsy by day and wakeful by night. My side pained me, my back ached, my [illegible] burned, I bloated fearfully and one leg got paralyzed. For ten months I suffered desperately, and two prominent physicians gave me up for a dead man, sure."

"You don't look it now?"

"No, that's so, but it was a fact, just the same. When I found out my trouble, I at once resorted to Warner's safe cure and a dozen bottles put me in possession of the best health I ever expected to enjoy, and I was pronounced incurably sick with Bright's disease. It is the most wonderful medicine in the world."

"Indeed. You are a fortunate man. Is there any falling off in the fireworks business this year?"

"Not at all. On the contrary it grows more popular every year, and this year we have done an extraordinary business. The American people are getting [illegible] of display as the mercurial Frenchman, and they manifest it by rockets [illegible] I reckon that $10,000,000 will [illegible] the incidental political expenses of a presidential campaign."

THE HARVEST OF THE YEAR.—The following table gives in outline the time of the harvest festival throughout the world according to the months, and is believed to be accurate:

In July harvesting begins in New England, the northern middle States, Upper Canada, the northern [illegible] States (from Ohio to Oregon, the southern [illegible] southern [illegible], Germany, Austria, Northern Italy, Hungary, Poland and Southern Russia.

August sees the ingathering in the rest of England, the Netherlands, [illegible], Central Russia, Manitoba and [illegible] Canada.

September is the harvest month in Scotland, Scandinavia and Northern Russia; in France buckwheat is harvested, the [illegible] New England and the middle English counties. In October, wheat, oats and barley are gathered in Scotland and Sweden, and apples and pumpkins in the northern States.

November rules Peru and Brazil, South Africa and North Australia.

December calls forth the husbandman to harvest in Chili, the Argentine Republic and South Australia.

January is a busy time in New Zealand, the South Sea Islands, Uraguay, and sees harvest ended in Australia and Central South America.

February sees harvest time begin in upper Egypt and India and continue until April.

March is the time of harvest in lower Egypt, the Barbary states, Arabia, Cabul and Indo-China.

In April the sickle is gleaming in the harvest fields of Syria, Cyprus, Persia, Asia Minor, the Ionian Isles and Mexico.

May enlarges the number and sees oil, wine and corn harvested in Asia Minor, [illegible], Sicily and Morocco; in Texas, Florida, China and Japan, harvesting begins.

June concludes the year and sees the harvest gathered in Spain, Portugal, Italy, the Danubian Provinces, California, Kentucky, Kansas, Virginia and the Carolinas.

THE TWO ANGELS.—There is a legend of the two angels: How God once called two of his chief angels and gave them commission to the earth; one was to rule [illegible], the other [illegible] part [illegible] to [illegible] to that heavenly being to serve and do His will in one place as in another.

THE FROGS OF WINDHAM.

ROME had her geese, and Pomfret her wolf, but Windham had her frogs.

Here on the historic green, in sight of the pond where it occurred, the episode of the frogs assumes a very different aspect from that given it in the humorous "History of Connecticut."

It was on the night of June 17th, 1754, that the gruesome, grotesque circumstance occurred.

The green was as fresh and vivid in color-[illegible] as [illegible] arched as gracefully, the [illegible] in the pond broke over its [illegible] and [illegible] as [illegible] musically then as now; but [illegible] people there was and foreboding and expectation of the momentary outbreak of a savage foe.

It was the eve of one of the bloodiest of the French and Indian wars. Windham County had special reason for fearing vengeance since, in acquiring some parts of her recent Susquehanna purchase, the Indians were known to have been aggrieved and wronged.

Goodman White's negro slave Pomp was the first to experience the terrors of the night.

Having lingered until a late hour beside a dusky Phyllis in one of the outlying farmhouses, he at length started to return to the village, a voudoo charm about his neck and a horseshoe in his hand as a protection against spooks.

The night was still, misty, and intensely dark. Pomp went his way whistling, his fears equally divided between the unsubstantial ghost and the more material Mohawk.

He had reached the green, when all at once a dire uproar burst upon him. Roar, bellow, gabble, shriek, splash, gurgle were combined, and the sounds came from everywhere at once—above, below, on this side and that, from field, and pond, and forest. To say that Pomp fled, and shrieked, and prayed, conveys no idea of the celerity of his flight nor the intensity of his groans and supplications.

But before he could reach the centre of the green, chamber windows were thrown open, nightcapped heads were thrust forth, and feminine shrieks and the strong cries of men added to the uproar; many swooned; the stronger fled, as they were, to the village green, where they huddled in a little group, every eye unturned to see through the murky gloom the glory of the opening heavens and the awful visage of the coming Judge.

In that company not one but believed that the last great day was at hand. But the stroke of judgment failed to come and soon the thought came to the stronger minds that the uproar was of terrestrial origin, and attributable to savage foes.

Peering into the darkness, and shrinking from the possible deadly tomahawk, they waited and watched.

At length they heard, amid the general Babel, distinct articulations, which gradually resolved themselves into the names of two of Windham's most prominent citizens—Colonel Dyer, the agent, and Squire Elderkin, one of the trustees, of the Susquehanna Company.

"We'll have Colonel Dyer!" "We'll have Colonel Dyer!" "We'll have Colonel Dyer!" the mysterious voices declared. And "Elderkin, too!" "Elderkin, too!" An equally mysterious chorus repeated, not a person but trembled for the fate of those two strong pillars of the commonwealth. The words "tete," "tete," which followed, were construed as meaning that the invading force was disposed to treat; but as nothing could be done in the darkness, the affrighted people contented themselves with placing a line of sentries around the town, and then withdrew to their homes.

In the morning, no savage army appeared nor was any cause of the strange voices of the night discoverable, and the occurrence would, no doubt, have been added to the long list of supernatural events detailed in Cotton Mather's Wonder-book, had not Pomp, watering his master's horses at the pond next morning, discovered multitudes of frogs lying dead and blackened in the water.

From it came as a revelation to the people of Windham than an army of frogs, smitten with some deadly epidemic, or perhaps, attacked by some invading army, had produced the affrighting sounds.

The revulsion of feeling, it is said, was great; the whole village assumed a sheepish air.

Somehow, too, the story got abroad, and brought a ripple of laughter to the face of the whole country.

Everybody was disposed to regard the experience of that terrible night as a rich joke. Gibes, puns, lampoons, ditties, and proverbs, were rained on the unfortunate Windhamites.

JOHN WEATHERLY.

CHANGE OF COLOR OF THE HAIR.—A young girl has just died in the asylum at Hamburg, who possessed the peculiar gift of changing the color of her hair according to the state of her mind. In periods of sedateness her hair was of its natural dull color; when excited it became reddish; and her anger was indicated by a blonde color. Three days were generally required for the change to be completed, and her complexion also varied in the same periods and in the same direction.

It is beyond question that Ayer's Cherry [illegible] and is worthy of the place of honor it [illegible] at the head of all remedies for diseases [illegible]

R. R. R.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

The Cheapest and Best Medicine for Family Use in the World.

CURES AND PREVENTS

Colds,
Sore Throat,
Inflammation,
Neuralgia,
Headache,
Toothache,
Asthma,
Difficult Breathing.

CURES THE WORST PAINS
in from one to 20 minutes.
NOT ONE HOUR
After reading this advertisement need any one
SUFFER WITH PAIN.

Radway's Ready Relief is a Cure for every Pain, Sprains, Bruises, Pains in the Back, Chest or Limbs.
It was the first,
AND IS THE ONLY PAIN REMEDY
That instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays inflammation, and cures Congestions, whether of the lungs, stomach, bowels, or other glands or organs, by one application.
If seized with threatened

PNEUMONIA,

or any Inflammation of the internal organs or mucous membranes, after exposure to cold, wet, etc., lose no time, but apply Radway's Relief on a piece of flannel over the part affected with congestion or inflammation, which will in nearly every case stop the inflammation and cure the patient by its [illegible] of counter-irritation, and by equalizing the [illegible] tion to the part. For further instructions, see our [illegible]

A teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will in a few minutes cure cramps, spasms, sour stomach, heartburn, nervousness, sleeplessness, sick headache, diarrhœa, dysentery, colic, flatulency and all Internal Pains.

Travelers should always carry a bottle of **RADWAY'S READY RELIEF** with them. A few drops in water will prevent sickness or pain from change of water. It is better than French Brandy or Bitters as a stimulant.

MALARIA

CURED IN ITS WORST FORMS.

Chills and Fever.

FEVER and AGUE cured for 50 cents. There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague, and all other Malarious, Bilious, Scarlet, Typhoid, Yellow and other fevers (aided by RADWAY'S PILLS) so quick as Radway's Ready Relief. Fifty cts. per bottle.

DR. RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

The Great Blood Purifier.

For the Cure of all CHRONIC DISEASES. [illegible] Diseases, [illegible] Ulcers, Hip Diseases, Gout, Dropsy, [illegible] Bronchitis, Consumption, Diseases [illegible] Liver complaints etc.

SKIN DISEASES,

Humors and Sores

On a [illegible] Diseases of the [illegible] not with great certainty by a few [illegible] SARSAPARILLIAN. We mean obstinate cases that have resisted all other treatment.

SCROFULA,

Whether transmitted from parents or acquired, is within the curative range of the SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

[illegible] been made where persons have been afflicted [illegible] with running sores, [illegible] 20 years standing.

Radway's Sarsaparillian Resolvent,

[illegible] Ingredients of extraordinary [illegible] purify, heal and [illegible] Sold by druggists. Price [illegible]

RADWAY'S REGULATING PILLS.

(The Great Liver and Stomach Remedy.)

[illegible] containing no mercury, minerals or deleterious drugs. Price, 25 cts. per box. Sold by all druggists.

DYSPEPSIA.

Hundreds of maladies spring from this [illegible] complaint. The symptoms of this disease are the [illegible] Heartburn, Acid Stomach, Pain after [illegible] or Water Brash, Gout [illegible]

RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN,

Aided by RADWAY'S PILLS, is a cure for [illegible] It restores strength to the stomach, and makes it perform its functions. The symptoms of Dyspepsia disappear, and with them the liability of the system to contract disease. Take the medicine according to directions, and observe what we say in "Facts and Trues" respecting diet.

Read "FALSE AND TRUE."

Send a letter stamp to RADWAY & CO., No 32 Warren Street, New York. [illegible] will be sent to you.

TO THE PUBLIC.

Be sure and ask for Radway's and see that the name Radway is on what you buy.

Our Young Folks.

LITTLE FE.

BY PIPKIN.

SO he was left an heir at the age of ten years—heir to all the fortune of his dead aunt, which consisted of two shillings and fourpence, a flower-basket, a pebble with a hole drilled through it, and a dying woman's blessing. "Truly," you will say, "he was rich."

He was small and thin, this little heir, and one poor leg was drawn up three inches higher than the other, which obliged him to walk with those wooden things called crutches.

He was called Fe; but his name was of very little use to him, as he could neither read nor write it.

An old woman had promised "to see after him for a bit" at his aunt's death.

She lived in a room in the same wretched lodging-house which had sheltered Fe and his aunt for the past six years.

I have not told you yet that my heir did not live in London, but in a large busy town in the south of England.

Fe's temporary guardian, Mrs. Crump, was short and cross, and not very young; her nose was slightly hooked, her eyes were black, and rather sharp.

She wore a jet black frizzled wig, which contrasted well with the primrose-tinted skin.

Her voice showed her bad temper, for it was sharp and harsh, like the creaking of a door.

After having settled and arranged everything, she bade Fe follow her into her black little room, and that was the last he ever saw of his poor little old home, where for ten long grown-up years he had lived, to go to rest weak, hungry, and ill, and to rise more weak, hungry, and miserable still.

Yet in that little home there had also lived a thin, worn-out woman, who had never spoken a harsh word to him, but had often tried to stay his tears with her kisses.

And Fe knew now—and the knowledge was agony—that he would never rest his eyes upon that sweet mother-face again.

Mrs. Crump earned what she could get by selling flowers in the streets.

She thought she could not turn poor Fe to better account than making him sell them too, so she arranged half her bunches in Fe's basket, and tied it round his neck. Then she took him with her, and while she went round to the houses Fe stood in the principal streets, and offered his flowers to the passers-by.

It was not long before he found out that the money he earned was not half what she did during the day, but such was her vanity that she could not at first bring herself to believe the people preferred to buy of the pale-faced cripple boy than of her, with her jet black wig and creaking voice.

When she found it was really the case, she was very angry.

But besides being a very jealous old woman, she was naturally avaricious in the extreme, and she kept Fe's earnings, and only gave him very scanty food in return.

She did not care to give up "seeing after him for a bit," yet she allowed a strong dislike to grow up against the boy in her own cross heart.

One day, as Fe stood by the side of the street, with his basket hanging from his neck, and a ray of sunlight shining straight into his eyes, he felt some one touch his arm, and when he turned round he saw a young lady leaning towards him.

She had long shining hair and blue eyes, there were dimples and bright pink on her cheeks.

She slipped sixpence into his hand, whispering something about keeping it quite for himself, and then passed on, walking very quickly.

When Fe looked up to thank her, he saw only the flowing shining hair under a round black hat in the distance.

He thought about the money for a long time; it was the first gift he had ever received, and he wondered if it was right to keep it for himself.

He thought how often, when he was hot and thirsty, he might buy a little milk, and it seemed refreshing only to think of it.

Then he remembered that Mrs. Crump took all the pence he earned, and he felt sure that she disliked him very much, and would take away his sixpence the moment she saw it.

So at last he twisted it in a leaf out of his basket, and pushed it through a hole into the lining of his coat.

When he went back with Mrs. Crump that evening and she asked him for his earnings, the little sixpence in his cap felt like a stone, seeming to weigh him down to the ground; and when he went to the corner where he slept, he lay down on his little ragged bed, cold and miserable; and though he was tired out, he could not sleep for thinking of his great white-room in comething like sixpence.

He looked round the room and thought it was a horrid place, and he held up his crutch to the window, almost hoping he would see that kind face once more; he longed for some one to say "poor little boy!"

Mrs. Crump was a horrid old woman, cross and ugly; perhaps it may not be so, but I do think that rooms [illegible] reminds their inmates.

The floor of the room was broken and uneven, the walls were covered with old newspapers, with here and there a scrap of brown wrapping-paper, making unsightly and hideous patterns; the whole was splashed with dirt and mildew; the floor was rotten at places, and black, and quite slippery with grease and dirt; the window had four panes, two of which were stuffed with rags.

As little Fe's tired eyes wandered round this dirty room, they fell upon the figure of Mrs. Crump sleeping in a bed in the opposite corner of the room.

She was breathing heavily, and after Fe had listened for some time to her short snores, he felt so miserable and lonely and wicked, that he formed the brave resolution of arousing her, and confessing to her the history of the sixpence.

It was strange that what Fe would have trembled to confess in the broad daylight he felt strong and brave enough to acknowledge by the light of the pale moon.

He crawled up, after a few minutes' thought, and after diving about his ragged bed, he found his cap, and took from the leaf his precious sixpence; then he crept to the side of Mrs. Crump's bed, shivering, but determined.

But suddenly he halted, and gave a scream of fright; a band of moonlight fell across the bed, and certainly there lay Mrs. Crump, but her nightcap had slipped off, and her black wig lay on a chair by her bedside.

Poor Fe, in his childish ignorance, had never had a doubt about the wig, in fact, he had never understood that people wore such things.

When he saw Mrs. Crump without hair, and the moonlight making her still more awful-looking, he was quite overwhelmed with fear.

The old woman rose up hastily at the scream, and she saw only little Fe quite motionless, with a wild, strained look of fright in his eyes.

When she made out in a half-asleep way that it was the child she detested who had dared to disturb her, wigless and asleep, her wrath boiled up, and when the same moonbeam showed her the shining silver clasped in the little hand, it fell hissing and spluttering and burning hot on the poor child's head, as he knelt speechless and trembling with fright.

She made up her mind in one instant that it must be some money he had taken for the flowers, and had kept back from her.

"You wicked, thievish boy!" she shrieked. "I'll teach you to thieve, and then pry about arter people be a-bed; so good as I've been to ye, too. Ye jest leave my door for good to-night."

And in a fit of passion she rolled out of bed, scolding and shaking poor Fe the while.

She pulled him down the three creaking steps and out into the cold wet street—and there, with one more cruel push, she left him, friendless and alone.

With a sob and a gasp he saw her shut the door, but the fright and shaking had been too much for his weakened frame.

He seemed for a few moments to feel again all the dreadful pain and anguish he remembered having felt when he was very ill once long ago.

His aching, weary little head seemed too heavy for him to bear, and with a moan of pain he fell forward, and lay where he fell insensible.

The moon looked down on the child's small form, and hovered for [illegible] and of her own [illegible] throwing [illegible] right just across old Mrs. Crump in her bed, and she stepped and kissed the poor boy as he lay on the hard stones, and tried in vain to warm him with her silvery light.

Bad old Mrs. Crump slept late on into the next morning, and this was the reason that she knew nothing more of what happened to the poor friendless little heir.

A doctor set out very early next morning to see a poor invalid woman who lived in the same street as little Fe's cruel guardian.

He was a smart plain little man, but his [illegible] had the right ring, and I believe his [illegible] that now is [illegible] kind and good, [illegible] [illegible] best [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

SEVEN TIMES ONE.

BY JEAN INGELOW.

There's no dew left on the daisies and clover,
There's no rain left in heaven :
I've said my "seven times" over and over,
Seven times one are seven.

I am old, so old, I can write a letter :
My birthday lessons are done ;
The lambs play always, they know no better ;
They are only one times one.

O moon ! in the night I have seen you sailing
And shining so round and low ;
You were bright! ah, bright! but your light is failing—
You are nothing now but a bow.

You moon, have you done something wrong in heaven
That God has hidden your face?
I hope if you have you will soon be forgiven,
And shine again in your place.

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow,
You've powdered your legs with gold !
O brave marsh marybuds, rich and yellow,
Give me your money to hold !

O columbine, open your folded wrapper,
Where two twin turtle-doves dwell !
O cuckoopint, toll me the purple clapper
That hangs in your clear green bell !

And show me your nest with the young ones in it ;
I will not steal them away ;
I am old ! you may trust me linnet, linnet—
I am seven times one to-day.

ERRATIC PENS.

THE journalist has no time to pick his words or sort his sentences with care. Once he has parted company with his MS., or as it is technically termed, "copy," it is, as a rule, a case of "what I have written ;" so that, given an easy-going "proof-reader," the supplier of news is likely to have reason enough to fret and fume when he sees himself in print ; deriving little consolation from knowing that slipshod writing often makes very funny reading.

Assuredly it is amusing to read one morning that the authorities of Alexandria are busily engaged disaffecting that, by all accounts, already sufficiently disaffected city ; and the next, that our Canadian cousins are discussing the possibility of the abduction of Her Most Gracious Majesty.

For these items of news we may be indebted to the compositor's maladroit intervention ; but that convenient scapegoat is hardly answerable for the statement that an opera by Signor Itiaci, "the son and nephew of the composer of that name," had been well received at Vienna ; nor can he be held responsible for the information that a certain town rejoices in a Society "for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals with upwards of a hundred dollars in the bank;" and that a certain event occurred on the night of the 25th of May, at about 2 o'clock in the morning.

It may be taken for granted that the rising School of Art is in the ascendant ; it is easy to believe in an overcome toper being found "with a pint-pot in his hand which he could not drink ;" but some of the statements made in the newspapers tax one's credulity overmuch.

Lenient as magistrates are towards feminine offenders, they would scarcely content themselves with fining a virago for "breaking her mother-in-law's arm by weekly instalments."

Good batters as are in the Chicago nine, we must beg leave to doubt that one of them made seventy-two runs in one inning. And clever as French doctors may be, they are not so clever as a Paris correspondent makes out, when, relating the discovery of a murder in that city, he tells us that "the only portion of the body not entirely destroyed was the left foot ; and a medical examination of the remains proved that the man had been killed by blows on the head."

Shakspeare was wrong in supposing there was any bourne from which no traveler could return. Glorifying the doings of Greeley's band of Arctic explorers, a leader-writer said :

"From the leader of the expedition, who occupied the crow's nest until he was overcome by exhaustion, to the humblest seaman who died from fatigue and cold, all have earned the rewards of heroes, and have come back laden with stores of knowledge."

Of an unlucky workman overbalancing himself, and tumbling from his airy perch into the street, we read :

"The deceased was seen to pitch head-foremost from the scaffold, and little hopes are entertained of his recovery."

Perhaps the deceased might have got over it had the doctor been as devoted as the gentleman called in to do his best for a poor hurt lad, who "was in frequent attendance upon him after his inquest."

Not, it may be hoped, from the remorseful feeling actuating his professional brother into writing :

"This is to certify that I attended Mrs. S. during her last illness, and that she died in consequence thereof."

Reporting the death of a cricketer from taking carbolic acid in mistake for black draught, an Irish newspaper said :

"The shopman filled the black draught bottle out of a carbolic acid jar, instead of that marked 'Senna Mixture,' though his orders were never to do so unless under supervision."

Relating a chase after a native robber, an Indian paper said :

"A Bheel outlaw, fleeing for the jungle, saw his comrades captured one by one, then followed his horse and his wife, and the wretched man at last found that his only companion was his mother-in-law. He thereupon gave way to despair, and was taken by the police without any further trouble."

Noticing the meeting of a new organization called the Grand State Defenders, a New York journal said the members were bound by a solemn oath "never to leave the State except in the case of an invasion by a foreign foe."

In each case the satiric insinuation is clear enough. Whether it is intentional or not, would require some skill at thought-reading to decide.

The London shopkeeper's "Boots sold and healed while you wait," is not so likely to attract customers as the more pronounced orthographical eccentricities of the Gloucestershire gardener, having "sallery plants for zale," and ready to supply all comers with "kalleflour, weentur greans, etc."

But it would be hard to resist the temptation of assisting at a dramatic entertainment lightened by the musical performances of "a band of amateur gentlemen ;" and still harder to refuse to take a ticket for a base ball match, knowing "the entire proceeds are for the benefit of the late James Jones, who is totally unprovided for."

Grains of Gold.

All feet tread not in one shoe.

A danger foreseen is half avoided.

We shall lie all alike in our graves.

Say no ill of the year till it be past.

Praise undeserved is satire in disguise.

Let each one do according to his ability.

The worst wheel of a cart always creaks most.

There is not a moment without some duty.

Bare-footed men must not go among thorns.

A crooked stick will have a crooked shadow.

When all is consumed, repentance comes too late.

Speak what good you can for any one, and let the rest go.

Never make your ear the grave of another's good name.

The charity which longs to publish itself ceases to be charity.

An opinion that is backed by curses, shows a limited range of ideas.

Too often we demand more affection than we give, more than we deserve, more than it is possible for us to receive.

Those who understand the value of time, treat it as prudent people do their money; they make a little go a great ways.

Only have enough of little virtues and common fidelities, and you need not mourn because you are neither a hero nor a saint.

Everywhere a Christian should be a positive power, so that wherever he carries himself, he will carry the power of Christianity.

Perhaps the happiest period in life most frequently is in middle age, when the eager passions of youth are cooled, and the infirmities of age not yet begun.

The power of the mind over the body is immense. Let that power be called forth, let it be trained and exercised, and vigor both of mind and body will be the result.

There is a deep significance in silence. Were a man forced for a length of time but to withhold his peace, it were in the most cases an incalculable benefit to his insight.

A desire to excel is a very important element in the conditions of success, and no young man can afford to ignore it. Without ambition, progress is simply impossible.

Our whole life is but a chamber which we are treseding with colors that do not appear while being laid on wet, but which will shine forth afterwards, when finished and dry.

Femininities.

Vermont has two women acting as mail carriers.

There are about 350 female missionaries in India.

A simple kiss from my mother made me a painter.—West.

Anna Dickinson was once paid $1,500 for a single lecture.

A Louisville, Ky., girl has been fined for kissing a negro.

For tending bar, a woman in Seattle, W. T., has been fined $20.

A female dentist in Newark, N. J., is said to be piling up a good practice.

The new reading is "bride and coachman," instead of "bride and groom."

The night that Othello sat down on Desdemona was the original smother evening.

Surely water is the woman of inanimate creation; versatile, lovely, pleasant, untamable and dangerous.

The perfection of dress is in the union of three requisites—in its being comfortable, cheap and tasteful.

By examining the tongue of the patient, physicians may find out the disease of the body—philosophers, of the mind.

"Aren't you in a good deal of a hurry in getting your storm doors up?" "Not a bit of it; my wife's mother will arrive at noon."

The two daughters of John Bell, the presidential candidate of 1860, are keeping a young ladies' academy at Chestnut Hill, Boston.

A Chinaman ran away with a Chicago man's wife a few days ago. It is understood that the husband encouraged the thing because he hates Chinamen.

There scarce can be named one quality that is amiable in a woman which is not becoming in a man, not excepting even modesty and gentleness of nature.

In almost every case where a man has fallen in love with a girl dressed in a bathing suit, and afterwards married her, divorce has followed within two years.

At the North Carolina State Exhibition one man showed an entire female wardrobe constructed with his own fingers, and another a bed-quilt of 6,000 pieces.

The foundation of every good government is the family. The best and most prosperous country is that which has the greater number of happy firesides.

The physical courage of women rarely enables them to struggle against agony of grief; but they have that moral courage which rises superior to peril or danger.

An observing Chinese traveler wrote home that all the upper-class American women had humps on their backs like camels, but located farther from their shoulders.

A young man who was jilted by his girl, and subsequently married her, says she treated him like a bottle of patent medicine. He was "shaken" before taken.

The size of parasols has so increased in Paris that they are almost as large as umbrellas, and the enlargement is the more noticeable as bonnets are becoming smaller and smaller.

The latest freak for female head gear in New York is called the pen-wiper bonnet. It has a huge rosette, simulating a pen-wiper, on the top, and is affected by fashionable young ladies.

When you feel inclined to sneeze, press your finger tightly on your upper lip, directly under the nose. It always stops the sneeze, but a queer sensation passes over one while doing this.

A syndicate of young men has been formed in a Dakota county, where there is a great dearth of young ladies, which will send a deputation to Boston to secure wives for the rest of the members.

The name of Annabella is not Annabella, or fair Anna, but is the feminine name of Hannibal, meaning gift (or grace) of Bel. Arabella is not Arabella, or beautiful altar, but Orabilla, a praying woman.

Showmen are annoyed because an Illinois girl, whose hair stands straight out from her head when left to itself, persists in binding it down to fashionable limits, instead of utilizing herself for museum purposes.

Man is continually saying to woman, "Why are you not more wise?" Woman is constantly saying to man, "Why are you not more loving?" Unless each is both wise and loving, there can be no real growth.

When a woman becomes so absent-minded as to forget to hold her hand where the light will fall upon her diamond ring, it is safest for her husband to give her a wide berth. She is doing some dangerous thinking.

Beauty is a dangerous property, tending to corrupt the mind of the wife, though it soon loses the influence over the husband; a figure agreeable and engaging, which inspires affection, without the charms of love, is a much safer choice.

To go to sugar houses at night by boat seems to be the proper thing among the Louisiana young folks just now. The good-natured and generous owners are always ready to give the girls lots of taffy, but the boys on these little harmless excursions generally raise cane.

The following advertisement, it is said, appeared recently in a French paper: "Found, on Sunday last, a lace mitten embroidered with pearls. If the person who lost it will be kind enough to leave the other one at the office of this paper, she will greatly oblige the finder."

Speak kindly in the morning ; it lightens the cares of the day, and makes the household and all its affairs move along smoothly. Speak kindly at night, for it may be that before dawn some loved one may finish his or her space of life for this world, and it will be too late to ask forgiveness.

News Notes.

France makes 7,750,000 umbrellas every year.

Street begging in Detroit is almost suppressed.

A Nueces county Texan has 6,000 horses on his ranch.

Sweet potatoes from the Pacific coast are sold in Chicago.

The best skilled workmen in Naples get but 30 cents a day.

Alligator farming is the latest industry developed in Florida.

A scientist says it is water, and not food, that makes people fat.

The pet aversion of a Japanese is the fate of being buried at sea.

A Macon, Ga., man has been fined $5 for failing to commit suicide.

The Japanese are credited with being the largest eaters of fish in the world.

A child skater of four years old is an attraction at a Pittsfield, Mass., rink.

"The Jolly Bachelor Club" is a Masonic social organization of Baltimore, Md.

Many of the street cars in New York have had stoves in them for a week past.

American fruit evaporators have been put to use as fruit driers in India and Ceylon.

$80,000,000 are spent annually in support of the public schools of the United States.

Far more women than men are said to have fallen victims to the cholera in Naples.

Steel pens and blotting paper are despised by Bismarck, who uses quill pens and blue sand.

Collecting menus and guest cards is now quite the rage among New York society devotees.

Counterfeit silver dollars are exasperating tradespeople in many Southern cities and towns.

A Portland Oregon, Chinaman suffering from scrofula, was put out by his friends and left to die.

Three hundred thousand dozen of eggs were destroyed by fire at Waterloo, Iowa, the other day.

It is estimated that the wool clip of this year will amount to 300,000,000 pounds, and be worth $85,000,000.

Boston has an apple mission which distributes 4000 or 5000 bushels of apples among the poor every year.

The measure of the respectability of a funeral in Rio Janeiro is the number of mules attached to the hearse.

Cuba will try her hand at base ball this winter, importing some of the players from the United States.

In the Montana cattle towns a newspaper, a shave, and a glass of whisky, all cost the same price, namely, 25 cents.

Somebody who alleges he has made the count, says that music is mentioned just 146 times in the Old Testament.

An up-town New York baker makes it a practice to sell bread at half price to poor people every Saturday evening.

Pine-needle pillows are the last whim of nervous invalids. They are said to be very quieting and productive of sleep.

An English surgeon says that shaving is a deadly practice, and if steadily indulged in shortens life by several years.

It is estimated that 1,200,000 domestic cats are used by the fur trade, their skins being made up into cloak-linings.

Voltaire said of the English, that though they have 24 religions, they have but one sauce. In France the proportion is reversed.

Veterans of the Federal and Confederate forces are to "clasp hands" in a co-operative camp in the World's Fair at New Orleans.

In the Vermont Legislature a bill has been introduced removing the disfranchisement of persons who had served in the rebel army.

Roller-skating has become so popular that skating rinks for ice skating will hardly prove remunerative in many places during the coming winter.

What becomes of all the torches used in political parades? Is the discussion that should take the place of the older inquiry about the disposition of pins.

A nine-ton lump of coal, claimed as the largest ever mined, will represent the coal interests of Birmingham, Alabama, at the New Orleans Exhibition.

An athiest, at a recent freethinkers' convention in Paris, is declared to have exclaimed, with great enthusiasm : "Gentlemen, I am an athiest, thank God!"

The ghost which has been terrifying the good people of Peekskill for some time, has at last been arrested and safely lodged in jail. Like other ghosts, it is earthly.

Cleveland has a fire and accident notification agency, which informs a man at home when his place of business is on fire. It has 600 subscribers at $5 each per annum.

Job Sheldon, a New Haven inventor, has constructed a walking machine with seven-foot legs which he declares will go as easily as a wagon with fourteen-foot wheels.

Leicestershire, Eng., boasts of a girl who, though barely fourteen years of age, is six feet five inches in height, weighs 226 pounds, and has "only just commenced to grow."

A rancher near Hawthorne, Nev., who owns a good many porkers, found a recently-born litter of pigs among his herd the other day, all of which were covered with fur, instead of bristles.

Sophronia's Dream.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

THE infidel Turks, ever at variance with the Christians, were, in the reign of King Orchanes, extremely ambitious to possess the famous Castle of Abydoes; and accordingly vast preparations were made for a close speech.

Previous to the arrival of the Turkish army before the Castle, Sophronia, daughter of the Governor of Abydos, was visited by a dream.

She thought that while walking out on a beautiful evening, breathing the fragrant air, and gazing on the brilliant stars, she fell into a loathsome ditch, in which she remained an instant, terrified, and unable to move.

At length a handsome youth passed, and she implored him to rescue her.

She did not implore in vain. The young man assisted her out, and comforted her with pleasant words.

Sophronia awoke, and and disappointed, to find that the affair was only a dream.

In a day or two afterwards, the Turkish army appeared, and a vigorous siege commenced; nevertheless, the Christians stoutly defended the place, and would, ultimately, have obliged the enemy to retire, had no intervention taken place.

It happened, unfortunately for the garrison, that a gallant Turkish Captain, in the prime of youth, called Abdurachman, approached so near to the Castle gates as to be plainly observed by the fair Sophronia from a small turret window.

The lady imagined this person to be the person to whom she was so much obliged in her dream, and rejoiced at the supposed discovery.

She hoped that the assailants would be successful in taking her father's Castle, that she might have an opportunity of falling into the hands of the gallant Captain she so greatly admired.

The siege still raged with much fury, but was continually repulsed by the brave Christians—insomuch that the Turkish general became disconcerted, and in the evening of the third day after the commencement of the siege retired to his camp, about a league distant from the scene of action.

Sophronia, meanwhile, was agitated at the ill success of the Turks, though she did not despair of seeing the Captain again.

She made a confidant of her maid Annis, who undertook, daring as the attempt was, to steal from the Castle to the enemy's camp, in order to convey a letter from her mistress to Abdurachman.

The intrepid Annis commenced her task in the night. She avoided passing the sentinels and wardens of the Castle, but found her way to a postern gate, scarcely known to any but herself.

She arrived at Abdurachman's tent, delivered the letter, which was bound with a lock of the fair writer's hair, and the astonished Abdurachman perused the following:

"ADORED YOUTH,—

"I am passionately in love with you, and am sorry that you have been frustrated in your endeavors to take the Castle. As I adore you beyond measure, I shall certainly die of grief if you do not succeed.

"I engage to deliver Abydos with all its riches into your hands, provided you follow my instructions.

"I advise, that in the morning, by sunrise, you raise the siege and withdraw your whole army from the Castle, and return not again till you hear from me.

"My father will be so rejoiced at your departure that he will be off his guard, and then I can easily conduct you with secrecy into the Castle."

The delighted Turk very politely answered this remarkable *billet doux*, assuring the fair writer that he was at her service, and that he would implicitly follow her directions as to the taking of Abydos.

As soon as he had dismissed Annis, he flew with Sophronia's letter to the General, who, upon reading it, expressed great astonishment.

He determined to raise the siege the next morning, and resolved to rely fully on the beautiful traitress for the future success of his enterprise.

The next day came, and the General raised the siege and departed. The Christians were rejoiced to see it, and in the evening made merry and drank wine.

The Governor's daughter took advantage of the garrison at this unguarded moment; and fearing to trust again to the sincerity of her maid, resolved to proceed herself to Abdurachman's tent. Annis led the way.

The night was serene, and the light of the moon showed the stately Castle of Abydos, dark and majestic.

No noise was heard, save the heavy and uniform step of the sentinels, whose bright arms, as they caught the moon's rays, sparkled against the gloomy-looking building.

Little did the inmates, now as tranquil as the night, dream of being surprised by an enemy! and little did the brave Governor imagine that his own beloved daughter at this moment was treacherously hastening to a merciless foe, with the intent to conduct him to Abydos!

Sophronia reached her lover's tent weary and faint, for she had walked with great haste. She sank into the Captain's arms, and then almost inaudibly informed him that not a moment was to be lost, and that he must follow her immediately to the Castle.

He obeyed; and having formed a litter for the lady, she was borne on the shoulders of four stout Turks. When they arrived at the postern gate, Sophronia told the Captain that he, with his men, must first enter the Castle, and then kill the sentinels and wardens, after which he would be enabled to give admittance to all his friends.

The Turks strictly obeyed the lady, who, before the affair began, hastened with Annis to her apartment in order to await the issue of her plot. The Turks entered the Castle by hundreds, killed all they met, and were soon masters of the place.

Meanwhile, Sophronia and Annis, both dreadfully agitated, heard from their chamber the dying groans of the poor Christians. Sometimes the clashing of swords was distinguished, as if a number of persons were engaged in combat; sometimes loud lamentation of women intervened; and sometimes the voices of the conquerors were alone heard in exultation.

At length the door of Sophronia's room burst open, and Abdurachman rushed in to seize her; while Annis, nearly dead with terror, calmly submitted to the grasp of a common soldier who accompanied the Captain.

The dreadful scene was acted and over. The Turks were possessors of the famed Castle of Abydos, and Sophronia's father, the Governor, was hanged.

Alas! deluded Sophronia! The faithless Abdurachman, whom she supposed to have seen in a dream, regarded her not. She was flung into prison, and one morning was discovered dead, remorse and mortification having at last broken her heart.

HE HISSES.—A citizen of Rio Janeiro blesses in the expression of a thousand and one ideas and intents, ranging from calling the attention of a waiter or street car conductor, to calming the electric agitation and modifying the miscellaneous movements of a belabored mule. The sibilant sound is softened somewhat in its utterance by the lips, and it is remarkable the distance it may be transmitted through a din. It requires a less expenditure of vitality to utter a hiss than an articulate word, and that in the environment of the earth, which has become organic in the sloth, is not to be ignored by either the facetious or the philosophic.

THE METALS.—Fifty-one metals are now known to exist, thirty of which have been discovered within the present century. Four hundred years ago but seven were known. The ancients are supposed only to have known the seven principal metals: gold, silver, copper, iron, lead, tin, and mercury; none were added to the list in the dark ages, but in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, zinc, antimony, and bismuth were discovered; in the eighteenth, platinum, nickel, arsenic, cobalt, and manganese, with seven or eight others.

WORTHY
Of Confidence.

AYER'S Sarsaparilla is a medicine that, during nearly 40 years, in all parts of the world, has proved its efficacy as the best blood alterative known to medical science.

SARSAPARILLA (extracted from the root of the genuine Honduras Sarsaparilla) is its base, and its powers are enhanced by the extracts of Yellow Dock and Stillingia, the Iodides of Potassium and Iron, and other potent ingredients.

IS your blood vitiated by derangements of the digestive and assimilatory functions? is it tainted by Scrofula? or does it contain the poison of Mercury or Contagious Disease?

THE leading physicians of the United States, who know the composition of AYER'S SARSAPARILLA, say that nothing else so good for the purification of the blood is within the range of pharmacy.

ONLY by the use of this remedy is it possible for a person who has corrupted blood to attain sound health and prevent transmission of the destructive taint to posterity.

THOROUGHLY effective renovation of the system must include not only the removal of corruption from the blood, but its enrichment and the strengthening of the vital organs.

RELIABLE witnesses, all over the world, testify that this work is better accomplished by AYER'S SARSAPARILLA than by any other remedy.

BLOOD that is corrupted through disease is made pure, and blood weakened through diminution of the red corpuscles is made strong, by AYER'S SARSAPARILLA.

PURIFYING the blood and building up the system require time in serious cases, but benefit will be derived from the use of AYER'S SARSAPARILLA more speedily than from anything else.

MEDICINE for which like effects are falsely claimed, is abundant in the market, under many names, but the only preparation that has stood the test of time, and proved worthy of the world's confidence, is

Ayer's Sarsaparilla,

PREPARED BY

Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.

Sold by all druggists: Price 1; six bottles for $5.

THE ONLY PERFECT REPEATING SHOT GUN.
BUY NO OTHER.

The Phœnix Co's New Repeating Shot Gun,
WITH RIFLE ATTACHMENT.

Shoots 8 times with 1 Loading. A $16.00 Repeating Shot Gun for $10.00.

PATENTED 1879. IMPROVED 1883. PERFECTED 1884.
—SAFE!— —SURE!— —RELIABLE!—

After a long and continued series of experiments, we have at last perfected a Repeating Shot-Gun, with a Rifle attachment, that cannot be Excelled in the World, and one which we can warrant to be not only perfect in all its details, but the best gun ever manufactured and offered to the sporting public, and is a marvel of cheapness, the price at which we offer this Gun is but a trifle above the actual cost of manufacture, and is given for a limited time only, in order to at once introduce this incomparable Gun to the Sporting Public. DESCRIPTION.—Total length 44 inches; Barrels, 26 inches. Has a very Elegant English Walnut Stock with Pistol Grip and rubber Trap plate, fine Steel Locks and mountings, including Steel Plate Heavily Nickel Plated. Can be reloaded in 20 seconds. It is both EFFECTIVE and ACCURATE. WE WARRANT IT TO BE NOT ONLY PERFECT IN ALL DETAILS, BUT THE CHEAPEST AND BEST GUN EVER MANUFACTURED. THE REGULAR PRICE IS $16.00, but in order to introduce this wonderful gun at once, we make this SPECIAL REDUCTION, and LIMITED OFFER to the readers of this paper. What we will do, upon receipt of only $10.00. We securely box and ship one of the PHŒNIX CO'S. 8-SHOT REPEATING SHOT GUN, WITH RIFLE ATTACHMENT, CLEANING INSTRUMENT and 25 BRASS SHELLS, loaded with shot, and 25 RIFLE CARTRIDGES, FREE to any address in the United States or Canada, provided you CUT THIS COUPON OUT and return to us with your order before Jan. 1st, 1885. We shall offer a limited number of these matchless Guns at $5.00 less than the retail price in order that they may become favorably known all over the United States and Canada. Every Gun Warranted as represented, our price for this Gun at our store is $16.00, but in order to more fully introduce them, and to do it quickly, we make a special limited offer of $10.00, provided you enclose the accompanying Coupon and $10.00 in cash, before Nov. 25th, 1884. AGENTS WANTED. The first ordering from any place will be made our special agent for their town for our Celebrated low priced Guns, Revolvers, Rifles, etc. Catalogue furnished giving our best prices. We make no profit on the Phœnix Repeating Shot-Gun at $10.00; our Catalogue price being $16.00, but we know when one has been sold, it has led to the sale of hundreds of dollars worth of goods at catalogue prices, hence our liberal offer.

COUPON. This Coupon is worth $6.00 and will be received as part payment for one of our CELEBRATED PHŒNIX REPEATING SHOT GUNS, with Rifle Attachment, as above described, provided you cut this out and return it to us with $10 in cash BEFORE JAN. 1st, 1885, but in no case will we sell or ship this Gun for LESS THAN $10 unless this coupon is returned with $10 when you order.

C. O. D. We will send one of the Phœnix Repeating Shot-Guns, with Rifle Attachment, to any address in the balance. The 50 loaded brass shells are not sent when guns are ordered C.O.D., but are given free when full amount of cash accompanies the order. Remember we warrant every Gun to be perfect in all its parts, accurate and effective, and to be just as represented. Money can be sent by P. O. Money Order, Registered Letter, or Draft on New York. Address or call on

PHŒNIX FIREARMS CO., 41 Barclay St., New York.

AGENTS WANTED

CARDS 20 Hidden Name 10 cts. 4 packs 50c., your name hidden by hand holding flowers on each. 50 New Imported Embossed Chromos 15c 4 packs 50 cts. (not embossed edges as on those advertised for 10c. but each flower &c. completely embossed) New 'S5 Sample Book, illustrated Premium List &c. sent FREE with each order. CAPITOL CARD CO., Hartford, Conn.

AGENTS Either Sex Wanted for DR. SCOTT'S Beautiful Electric Corsets. Sample free; no risk, quick sales. Territory given. Satisfaction guaranteed. Address DR. SCOTT, 842 Broadway, N. Y.

CARDS. 50 Best Chromo Cards, name on in New Style Type, 40 Selections for Autograph Albums, 10 New Games, 200 Latest Songs, 6 Stampers, a price list all for 15c. 6 packs and Plated Ring free, for 60c. Agents wanted. *Nelson Card Co., Waltham, Mass.*

AGENTS WANTED.—It will pay persons wanting profitable employment to write for extra terms for the best and fastest-selling Pictorial Books, Bibles and Albums, to National Publishing Co., Philada., Pa., and Chicago, Ill.

$250 A MONTH. Agents wanted. 20 best selling articles in the world. 1 sample free. Address JAY BRONSON, Detroit, Mich.

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CHRISTMAS PRESENTS FOR ALL YOUR FRIENDS!

Contains All the following articles: 1 German Chromo in Handsome frame; 1 Combination Easel and Chromo, a pleasing parlor ornament; 1 Fine Steel Engraving; 2 Curious Amusing Changing Pictures; 1 beautiful Chromo Banjo, for Wall Decoration; 1 handsome Oriental Scrap Tidy; 1 very pretty Wall Pocket; 1 funny Shadow Card; 2 Ornamental Vase Mats; 1 Elegant Parlor Lamp Mat; 1 Scripture Motto; 2 Floral Mottoes in Natural Colors; 1 Richly-Colored Japanese Window Transparency; 2 Mirror Ornaments; 1 Decorated Autograph Fan; 20 Colored Album Pictures; 1 Nice Neck-Tie Pin; 1 Boy's and Girl's Picture Book, with 25 Colored Illustrations; 2 Jolly Winter Evening Parlor Games for Young and Old; 1 Imported Doll; 1 Doll's Fan; 1 Doll's Bouquet; 1 Magic Menagerie of 12 Animals; 1 Magnetic Toy; 1 Miniature, an Imported Musical Toy on which any tune can be played; 1 Toy Locomotive and Car; 1 Box of Paints; 1 Toy Omnibus and Horses; 2 Puzzles; 1 Toy Elephant; and 6 Artistic Christmas Cards. To advertise our business, we will send this entire lot, All the above-named articles, postage paid, by return mail, for Only 40 Cents. Send us $1.20 for two Merry Christmas Boxes, and we will give you, FREE, a Microscope that magnifies so powerfully that it shows a hair from your head to be hollow, and discloses thousands of other strange sights hidden from the naked eye. Stamps taken. A. E. Howard & Co., 26 Bainbridge St., Boston, Mass.

Gossamer Garments Free!

To any reader of this paper who will agree to show our goods and try to influence sales among friends, we will send post-paid two full-size Ladies' Gossamer Rubber Waterproof Wearing Apparel as samples, provided you cut this out and return with 25 cents to pay postage, etc. Warren M'f'g Co., 9 Warren St, N. Y.

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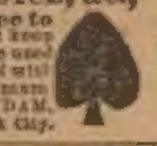
A SURE THING! Sent Free to Anyone.—I manufacture and keep constantly on hand every article used by the sporting fraternity to WIN with in games of chance. Send for illustrated circular. Address EAT BUYDAM, 63 and 67 Nassau Street, New York City.



SYKE'S BEARD ELIXIR Forces luxuriant Mustache, Whiskers or hair to hold beads in 21 days. No injury. Sample sent free to any part of the world. 2 or 3 Pkgs. done the work. Will grow it on Bald Heads. Package with directions sealed and postpaid 25 cents. Circulars free. E. A. I. SMITH & CO., Agents, Palatine, Ill.

SALARY Paid Local or Traveling Salesmen to sell our Kitchen Specialties to the trade. State salary wanted and address The Clipper Mfg. Co. Limited, Cincinnati, O.

YOUR NAME on 50 all Hidden Name and Embossed Chromo Cards 10c.; They all Sparkle; 4 packs and Plated Gold Ring 10c.; 10 packs and Four Blade Pearl Handle Knife $1. Agent's Outfit 10c. Address Hub Card Co., Boston, Mass.

CARDS—BEST OFFER YET! 50 Gold Bevel Edge, hidden name, Cards for 10c. W. B. COE, Middletield, Conn. Price Lists, Premium Lists, etc., free with each order.

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FREE! FREE!

To introduce our New and Popular Books at once, we make the following liberal offer for the Holidays: The person telling us the longest verse in the Bible before Jan. 1st, will receive a Solid Gold Hunting Cased Lady's Watch worth $50.00. If there be more than one correct answer the second will receive a Solid Silver, Stem Winding, Gentleman's Watch worth $25.00, the third a key winding Silver Watch. Each person must send with their answer 10c. in stamps, for postage, for which they will receive 7 Valuable and Popular Books as follows: 1, Manual of Etiquette, for ladies and gentlemen, a guide to politeness and good breeding, giving the rules of modern etiquette for all occasions. 2, The Standard Letter Writer, for ladies and gentlemen. A complete guide to correspondence, giving plain directions for the composition of letters of every kind with innumerable forms and examples. 3, Winter Evening Recreations, a large collection of Acting Charades, Tableaux, Games, Puzzles, &c., for social gatherings, private theatricals and evenings at home; illustrated. 4, Dialogues, Recitations and Readings, a large and choice collection for school exhibitions and public and private entertainments. 5, Parlor Magic and Chemical Experiments, a book which tells how to perform hundreds of amusing tricks in magic and instructive experiments with simple agents. 6, Sixteen Complete Stories, by popular authors, embracing love, humorous and detective stories, stories of society life, of adventure, of railway life, etc., all very interesting. 7, Fancy Work for Home Adornment, an entirely new work upon this subject, containing easy and practical instructions for making fancy baskets, wall pockets, brackets, needle work, embroidery, etc., etc., profusely and elegantly illustrated. Cut this out and name paper. Address E. G. BABCOCK & CO., CENTERBROOK, CONN.

A SAMPLE RING WITH YOUR MONOGRAM
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To every reader of this advertisement. The leading New York style is now the NEW MONOGRAM, and we are making a leading specialty of this Elegant 18 K Rolled Gold Solid Ring, with initials worked into a handsome Monogram. The principal letter is beautifully hard Enameled and the others Magnificently Hand Engraved, making a splendid combination, unique design, new style and handsomely finished in beauty, suitable for lady or gent, and warranted exactly as represented or money cheerfully returned. In order to get new customers at once in every town and introduce our catalogue of new styles and designs, we will do the following liberal offer:—On receipt of $1.00, to help pay postage, packing and this advertisement, we will send a sample ring as described above to anyone who will send us the names of at least 6 parties to whom we can send our New Catalogue. We offer you the handsomest ring ever made, for $1.00 and this trifling service. If bought at any jewelry store would cost $5, our regular price, $2.50. $1.00 does not cover cost of manufacturing, but we know this to be in the end the most effective and cheapest way to advertise and introduce any meritorious article. GALAXY MFG. CO., 168 Third Ave., New York City.

Stem-Winding Musical Watch.

Each Watch is finely made, silver plated and the greatest novelty ever offered to the boys and girls of America. It is a COMPLETE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT, size and shape of a watch, with Music Box attachment concealed within, so arranged that when wound at the stem plays one of the following tunes: "Home, Sweet Home," "Yankee Doodle," "Blue Bells of Scotland," "Swanee River," "Carnival of Venice," "Grandfather's Clock," and a Waltz. The notes, time, and tunes are correct. It instructs and entertains both old and young. On receipt of 36 cts. will send it by mail, post-paid. Just think of it! A Music Box for 36 cents. You will be delighted with it. Address Send P. O. STAMPS. SHERWOOD & CO. 4 WATCHES FOR $1. BOX 63, WMSBURG N. Y.

Christmas Package Free!

Our New Christmas Package contains all the following useful presents for the Holidays: 1 Nice Imported Scrap Book, size 9½ x 6¼ inches; 1 Chromo Picture, with Easel, a pretty musical ornament; 50 Decalcomanie or Transfer Pictures, in neat album; 4 very handsome Christmas Cards; Beckner's Musical Chart, a complete self-instructor for the Piano or Organ; Fine Portraits of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and James A. Garfield; 20 new and Popular Songs; 10 new Parlor Games; 9 Parlor Tableaux; 12 Good Cookies and other Receipts. Special Offer: Upon receipt of Twenty-five Cents in postage stamps we will send our large 32-page, handsome, illustrated Literary and Family paper, The Fireside at Home, for Three Months, and the above valuable package Free, by mail post-paid. This liberal offer is made to introduce our paper into new homes. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. For $1.00 we will send five subscriptions and five Christmas Packages. Please mention this paper. Address, S. M. MOORE & CO., 37 Park Place, New York.

A LOVELY CHRISTMAS GIFT.

Every Christmas we make the little folks a Christmas Present. This year we have something nice and pretty. To introduce our goods in every home we will send to any boy or girl Free of charges, if you will send 10c. for postage, &c., 3 pretty Dolls with beautiful flexible bodies, pretty curls and blue eyes or large and dark eyes, and wardrobe of 21 pieces, Hats, &c., one elegant gilt-bound floral Autograph Album illustrated with birds, flowers, scrolls, &c., five fancy Christmas Cards, one pretty Birthday Card and a nice Illustrated Holiday Book. ACME MFG. CO., Ivoryton, Conn.

New Publications.

The serial story, "Trajan," which began its brilliant course in the columns of *The Manhattan* was cut short at its very beginning by the sudden suspension of that periodical. Only twelve chapters saw the light of print, but they were enough to attract wide attention and pique curiosity as to its authorship. To the readers of *The Manhattan* and to the novel reading public at large, it will be good news that Messrs Cassell & Co., have made arrangements with the author to publish "Trajan" in book form.

MAGAZINES.

Arthur's Home Magazine has the following contents for December: Our Little Son, Illustrated; Remarkable Tapestry Wrought by the Hands of a Queen, Illustrated; Mary Clemmer, Illustrated; Christmas Morning—Flowers for Mamma, Illustration; Christmas in the Street—The Match-Seller, Illustration; Cat Painters, Illustrated; The Knife Grinder, Illustrated; A Study in Shoes, Illustrated; Fetes of the Sixteenth Century, Illustrated; Love's Burial; The Home Departments, etc. etc. $2.00 per year. Arthur & Son, Phila., Pa. Publishers.

With its new number the *Magazine of Art* opens right royally its new volume. Not satisfied with giving a handsome etching by R. W. Macbeth, "Here it is," as a frontispiece to the number, the publishers present to each subscriber to the new volume a beautiful etching, by J. A. S. Monks, after his popular painting, "Crossing the Pasture." This etching is a companion in size to Mr. Farrar's "Evening by the River," and is suitable for framing or portfolio. The opening paper of this number, describing 'The New Forest' is by Millicent Garnett Fawcett, wife of the late Postmaster-General of England. Miss Helen Zimmern writes of Benjamin Vautier, the painter of peasants; and Mr. Andrew Lang lays down the pen of the rhymester to write of 'Some Japanese Bogies.' Facing two of the most terrifying of these bogies is the dainty page devoted to Mr. R. L. Stevenson's poem, 'A Visit From the Sea,' and Miss Alice Haver's illustrations of it, printed in a delicate sea-green tint. F. Mabel Robinson writes of 'Romance of Art'—a fruitful subject—and 'Hatfield House,' the residence of the Marquis of Salisbury, is described by J. Penderel-Brodhurst. Other papers are devoted to Meissonier, 'Greek Myths in Greek Art,' 'Illustrations of Moliere,' and 'Some Portraits by Hogarth,' and described by Austin Dobson. Every page of the number bears an illustration. Cassell & Co., Limited, New York. Price 50 cents per number.

The danger of incidental harm to the community, or to certain classes of people from the increased use of machinery, the extension of public works, etc., is greatly diminished when those who make the laws and especially those whose duty it is to interpret them, recognize that law is a progressive science. How the most enlightened jurists hold this principle constantly in view, and how the common as well as the statute law is thus made to keep pace with the general advance of civilization, is admirably set forth in the leading article in the *The North American Review* for December, Labor and Capital before the Law, by Judge T. M. Cooley, of Michigan. To the same number William K. Ackerman contributes some suggestive Notes on Railway Management; Dr. Schlieman tells what he found in his excavations of the ruins of Tiryns, in Southern Greece, and Principal Shairp supplements his scholarly article on Friendship in Ancient Poetry, with one on, Friendship in English Poetry. The other articles in the number are: The British House of Lords, by George Ticknor Curtis, and Responsibility for State Roguery, by John F. Hume. The North American Review, New York. Price 50 cents per number.

With the December number *Cassell's Family Magazine* closes its volume for the year. The interesting serial Within the Clasp, is brought to a close. The frontispiece of the number illustrates a poem, the Lover's Quarrel. The Cooper's Hill Engineering College is described by J. Munroe. The Family Doctors this month gives a sketch of his obstinate patient. The garden for November is discussed, and the State robes of peers and peeresses are described. Miss C. F. Gorden-Cumming gives a pleasant glimpse of Norway, and Catherine Owen has something to say about Coney Island. An amusing and instructive article on the duties of Mr. Chairman, and The Story of Atlantic Telegraphy about conclude the number of special papers. The Wayward Ward is the beginning of a new serial, which promises well, and there is a short story called Livia's Mistake. A fashion letter, poetry and music help make up the number, which is profusely illustrated. The prospectus for 1880 promises many attractions. Price $1.50 a year. Cassell & Co. publishers, New York.

NEW MUSIC.

A musical work of the well-known composer, now deceased, J. Astor Broad, and hitherto unpublished, is his dramatic cantata, David and Saul. It is well adapted to chorus societies, church festivals, musical conventions, and though somewhat ambitious, for the home circle. It contains besides the musical score and words full directions for costumes and performance. Published by White, Smith & Co., Boston, Mass. and for sale by leading music stores throughout the country.

Never "bull-doze" a man, but if you meet a human being suffering with a bad cough you may "bull-doze" him to advantage with Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup.

SEEING THE POINT.

His cash he spent with lavish hand,
Nor to his friends' advice gave ear,
That neither health or wealth would stand—
But aye he answered with a leer:
"I cannot see the point. Ne'er fear—
I'll stop whene'er I have the will."

He paused not in his wild career,
Till one day in the future, chill,
With trembling lip and bitter sigh,
It napp'd a sign-board he beheld,
Whereon a finger points the eye
Unto the poor-house. He's compelled—
While blinding tears his cheeks anoint—
To own at last he sees the "point."

—WM. MACKINTOSH.

Humorous.

An Indian orator is a red he speaker.

A pair of "nippers"—Two old topers.

A calico wrapper—A dry goods clerk.

What is the worst kind of fare a man can live on? Warfare.

Why is the telegraph like a musical director? It beats time.

Why is a widow like a gardener? She tries to get rid of her weeds.

Why is a loaf which has fallen overboard like a lobster? It is bred in the sea.

It is idle for a man to say he is no longer young. He is longer. Age crooks and shortens a man.

The man who got the last word in disputing with a woman has advertised to whistle for a wager against a locomotive.

"What are pauses?" asked the teacher of the primary class. "Things that grow on cats," piped the small boy at the foot.

Some one asks how the great men of this country began life. We are under the impression that they began life as infants.

Weevils have appeared in both cigars and cigarettes, and smokers are beginning to choose the latter because of two weevils they wish to choose the lesser.

"No," said the politician, "I never lend my influence to an unworthy cause." He forgot to mention that the reason why he did not lend was because he sold it.

A farmer put up the following notice: Whoever is caught trespassing on these grounds will be given forty lashes upon the bare back. Half the penalty to the informer.

A boy's grief, upon being refused permission to attend a circus, was in part assuaged by the assurance from his mother that if he would dry his tears he might go and see his father have a tooth extracted.

A gentleman who was dining with a young married couple in Kansas, asked, somewhat abruptly: "Ever had a cyclone here?" The young people looked smilingly at each other, blushed and changed the subject.

All great men have some eccentric habit, and now that Sitting Bull is becoming civilized, he is not an exception. Whenever the great chief appears at dinner he carefully unfolds his napkin, spreads it on his chair, and sits upon it.

Fur and Sealskin Garments.

C. C. Shayne, the well-known Fur Manufacturer, 103 Prince St., New York, will sell elegant Fur Garments at retail at cash wholesale prices this season. This will afford a splendid opportunity to purchase strictly reliable Furs direct from manufacturer, and save retailer's profits. Fashion Book mailed Free.

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Madame Wambold's Specific permanently removes Superfluous Hair without injuring the skin. Send for circular. Madame WAMBOLD, Townsend Harbor, Mass.

☞ **When our readers answer any Advertisement found in these columns they will confer a favor on the Publisher and the advertiser by naming the Saturday Evening Post.**

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FOR 25 CENTS we will send you The Illustrated Companion for three months and one numbered receipt, good for one present. For 50 cents we will send the paper six months and (TWO numbered receipts good for two presents. For $1 will send paper One Year and Four numbered receipts good for Four presents.

SHALL THE $4,000 BE YOURS!

A FREE SUBSCRIPTION TO YOU! If you will Cut this Advertisement out and show it to your friends, neighbors and neighbors, and get five to subscribe for three months, and send us $1.25, we will send your subscription free and one numbered receipt; get ten to subscribe and we will send you two numbered receipts and the COMPANION for six months; get twenty to subscribe for three months and we will send you the COMPANION one year, and Four numbered receipts, good for Four Presents. A few hours' work will give you a subscription free and a chance to win one of the most valuable Presents.

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If you are among the first 900 persons who answer this advertisement you will get free one of these Ladies' Solid Gold Watches. There are 900 of them and they are first-class in every respect and the cases are beautifully ornamented. They will be given out at once to the first 900 subscribers. By replying immediately you may be one of the lucky ones and get this beautiful Watch for your Mother, yourself or your girl, FOR A CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

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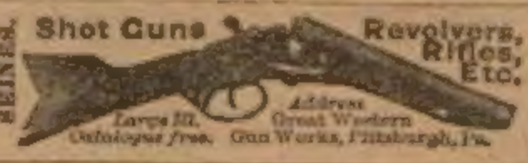

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DIVORCES ABSOLUTE DIVORCES without publicity for persons residing throughout the United States, for desertion, non-support, intemperance, cruelty, incompatibility, etc. Advice free. State your case and address Attorney Ward, World Building, 1267 Broadway, N. Y.

10 CENTS WILL BUY 250 Scrap Pictures, 1 copy Tennyson's Poems, 20 Fancy Work Designs, 1 Beautiful Plaque, 100 Album Quotations, 15 Magic Tricks. All for 10 cents silver. F. S. AVERY, Box 22, Williamsburg, N. Y.

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To introduce our goods and secure future trade, we will send you free of charge, if you will send 25c. to defray the postage, &c., 5 pretty Christmas Cards, 5 nice New Year Cards, 1 lovely Birthday Card, a beautiful gilt-bound floral Autograph Album illustrated with birds, flowers, forms, &c., a handsome Photographic Portrait of all the Presidents of the United States neatly arranged in an album with a fac-simile Autograph of each; also our new Holiday Book. Address J. W. BABCOCK & CO., CENTERBROOK, CONN.

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70 Chromo Cards and Tennyson's Poems mailed for ten 1-cent stamps. Acme Mfg. Co, Ivoryton, Ct.

Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

IF everybody were young and pretty there would be no difficulty in selecting our bonnets and hats from the varied and coquettish models prepared for the autumn and winter seasons, but many of these autumnal bonnets are too fanciful and too coquettish for those ladies who, although still pretty, can no longer be termed youthful.

Discretion and good taste are not, alas, inbred in every woman, and consequently our eyes are too often shocked by the sight of dames of thirty-five and older appearing in hats, which youthful headgear adds to their only too apparent age the stigma of a ridiculous assumption of youth.

Bonnets, and sensible bonnets, with the wide strings now worn, should be adopted by all who have seen more than thirty summers. But, it will be argued, women are only the age they appear to be.

If this axiom, which has led many astray, be possessed of any truth, it must be remembered that while many of us look fresh and pretty for a moment on leaving our mirrors, yet the day's fatigue, the cares of life, and the loss of youthful illusions soon cause the momentary bloom to fade, and a moment's exertion, an *ennui*, or a pain, may in a moment add years to our appearance, and it is then that certain coiffures appear ludicrous.

If a bonnet be too small for the face, an error easily fallen into, it adds age to the outline, while a bonnet built on too large and too showy scale renders the wearer an object of remark not always of a complimentary description.

While we avoid the Scylla of a too youthful head-dress, let us not fall into the Charybdis of dowdyness, but endeavor to gather ideas from the prevailing modes, which are suitable to our personality and adapt them to our use.

Public taste has long ago tired of the endless pleatings, draperies and puffs which have been so long in vogue, and yet it is not easy to find so generally useful a model as the pleated skirt.

The accordion pleats are extremely stylish while in fresh beauty, but the furore in skirts is the new plain skirt which is very full and is gathered at the waist.

The plain skirt is only so called because it is not pleated, for it is often so richly trimmed as to deserve but little its title. The material for a so-called plain skirt may be broche velvet, or woollen woven with chenille squares, or the front of plain faille may be trimmed with separate designs, embroidered or of passementerie.

These plain dress skirts have brought into fashion rich brocaded silks, satins, and above all Lyons velvets and velveteens.

The under or false skirts are finished by three or four little flounces, which set out the edge of the dress, the front and side scalloped in very fanciful shapes. A mode which was in vogue three years ago has returned to favor in the shape of thick ruches placed on the hem of the plain skirts.

These ruches are pinked out, others are lined and reversed; all are cumbrous in walking and require to be worn on skirts short enough to clear the feet in walking.

A very pretty style of so-called plain skirt is of sicilienne or soft silk draped over a foundation skirt; at the edge of this is a wide band of velvet of the same color as the dress, put on plain with a "seal head" scallop, a fine silk cord of the same color as the velvet cutting the seal head scallop. This dress has a width of sicilienne draped as grasshoppers' wings over a full, straight fold of the velvet, which forms the back width of the dress.

The bodice is of the velvet with sicilienne plastron and cuffs. It looks well made in two shades or in contrasting colors.

A very simple and at the same time effective toilette is thus made:—The false skirt, edged with flounces and armed with steels, is covered by a full skirt of faille edged with fine tucks, one and a-half inches in depth; beneath the last of these tucks or folds and above the hem is a narrow flounce of lace or of embroidered silk.

The corsage is rounded at the back and pointed in front; a satin ribbon is passed round the waist and ties in front at the edge of the plastron.

Street costumes are naturally the special preoccupation of the moment, and for these the jacket bodice presents the most useful combinations; the waistcoats can be varied and the jacket can be of cloth or velvet, or of the same material as the dress. English serge cloth are among the fashionable materials for these costumes.

Of the jackets we have an excellent selection, the shapes mostly in favor being the Gentleman, the Pilotin, and the Petite Mere.

The Gentleman is usually of fine cloth cut straight in front, and is worn without the buttons being fastened; the Pilotin, or Pilote, is made of blue Cheviot cloth and trimmed with brass buttons: it is very stylish for young girls.

The Petite Mere jacket is far more serious in character; at the back this jacket fits the figure, the fronts are semi-fitting with a small plastron, a satin ribbon starts from the side seams and is loosely tied below the waist.

Exaggeration is to be avoided in all questions of the toilette, but especially as regards the tournure.

Always a little absurd, the tournure has reached ridiculous proportions, and from day to day the eye becoming used to the effects has become blinded to the ugly side of a stylish mode.

It is not possible for very short ladies to wear as large a tournure as those who are tall, and a too voluminous pouf will destroy the charm of the most elegant toilette.

Plain and shaded stripes are the prevailing pattern in all the new autumnal woollen fabrics; cheviots, tweeds, serges, short and long haired woollen materials show this zebra-like appearance, with shaded stripes in fawn, dark red, quiet shades of blue, unobtrusive greens, and even a little yellow, all carefully blended together, and the brighter tones subdued by the proximity of the more sober ones.

Plain material to correspond is used with these striped fabrics, and the result is eminently stylish and successful, the mode being also one of those that admits of endless variations and combinations.

The striped materials were first employed for mantles: for this purpose a long-haired tweed is the fabric that meets with most approval, especially in a shade of grey brown and red tones, ranging from light red to the deepest mahogany tint.

A handsome model of a vetement made of this cloth is buttoned to the edge in front with artistic bronze buttons; the skirt is pleated at the back, and the large sleeves are in visite form.

A wide band of mahogany velvet forms a bretelle over the shoulder, and ends in a long point front and back, both points terminating under a large velvet bow, lined with silk in a lighter shade; the collar and sleeve revers are of velvet, and the whole mantle is lined with silk.

Ribbed materials of all kinds are in great vogue: silk and woollen reps, Bulgarian velvet and Escurial, all partake of this character, and are all fashionable.

Alexis velvet and chenille embroideries are other novelties for the season, and are used for costumes or for the skirts of costumes, completed by a military jacket.

Of these there are many types, but those most approved of are the short-waisted Hungarian jacket, in cloth of any shade, loaded with rich gold and silk embroidery; the Tirailleur, in grey or blue cloth—a very simple vetement, with dark-hued velvet parements and brandenburghs to match; and Garde Francaise jackets in light cloth, ornamented with gold braid mixed with silk and wool.

Jersey bodices, with embroidered velvet waistcoats, must also be reckoned amongst the autumn modes.

These in light colored silk jerseys, with a pointed plastron of black velvet embroidered with silk and gold, are very fashionable for evening wear.

The bodice is made with short basques the plastron is wide at the neck, and ends in a long narrow point. The straight collar bands and parements on the elbow sleeves are of black velvet, embroidered like the plastron.

A revival, which we notice with regret, is the employment of small birds as ornaments for chapeaux.

Many ladies are strongly opposed to this fashion, and we can only hope that their remonstrances and influence will tend to check the mode on its first appearance. Feather ornaments of a fancy description entail no suffering on the birds whose plumage is used, but this is not the case with small birds, which cannot be imitated.

Fireside Chat.

FOOD FOR LIMITED INCOMES.

PERHAPS it may be considered strange that when addressing you I should speak about providing food for people with limited incomes.

Of course there are people in the world who can order dinner without waiting to think of its price. For everyone so circumstanced, however, there are hundreds and thousands who know what it is to heave a sigh for the cost of every dish they cook, and who spend their lives in the weary endeavor to make half a dollar do the work of a dollar.

Almost instinctively, the first dish which is mentioned is beef-steak pudding. This I consider a most profitable and economical dish. It is wholesome, nourishing, and satisfying.

A pudding made with a pound and a half of steak and half a pound of bullock's kidney will be sufficient for half a dozen persons, and there will be plenty of gravy, which the children like. The following is an excellent recipe:—

Beefsteak Pudding.—Make some stiff paste with a pound of flour, 6oz. of finely-chopped suet, a little salt, a small teaspoonful of baking-powder, and water. Take 1½lb. of bullock or chuck steak and half a pound of kidney. A little beef skirt may also be used with advantage; it helps to make the gravy good. Remove the skin, cut the meat into small pieces, and roll each one in a mixture of a tablespoonful of flour, a tablespoonful of salt, and a teaspoonful of pepper. Take one-third of the quantity of pastry for the lid, and roll the rest out to a round shape twice the size of the top of the pudding basin. Grease the inside of the basin with dripping. This can be done most effectually and quickly with the fingers, and when the hands are perfectly clean it is not objectionable.

Line the basin with the paste, put in the pieces of meat, and pour on a small teacupful of water or good gravy. Wet the edges of the pastry, roll out the piece that was left for the cover, then lay it on the top and press the edges well together.

Dredge flour over the top, wring the cloth out of hot water, dredge it also with flour, tie it on tightly by passing a string round the rim of the basin, turn the corners of the cloth over and tie them together.

Put the pudding into a pan of boiling water, being careful that it is covered entirely, and keep it boiling with the lid on for three and a half or four hours. If it is necessary to add more water, put it in boiling.

When done, let the pudding stand a minute or two, or else dip the bottom of the basin in cold water for a quarter minute, to keep the pastry from bursting.

Remove the cloth, have ready a hot dish, put it on the top of the pudding, remove it gently, and lift the basin off carefully. If liked, an onion boiled and minced may be added for the sake of the flavor.

Indeed, all sorts of improvements may be introduced. A few oysters or mushrooms, or a grouse or partridge, may be added, or rump steak instead of buttock steak may be employed, but in these cases the pudding will not be so economical as if the above instructions are followed.

If any of this pudding is left, and it is required for the next day, the following is the best way of warming it.

Put it into a greased basin and lay a plate on the top. Put it into a pan with boiling water to come half-way up the basin, and let it boil for about an hour, or till it is hot through. Serve it with gravy in a boat.

Meat puddings and pies are such a valuable resource for housekeepers of limited income that all sorts of variations have been made. Here is an excellent one:—

Potato Pie made with Neck of Mutton.—Take 1½lb. of the middle of the neck of mutton, the portion which lies between the scrag and the fatty part. Cut this, bones and all, into pieces of about one inch square. Place these in a pie-dish with plenty of thinly-sliced potatoes, putting first a layer of meat, then one of potatoes, then another layer of meat, and plenty of potatoes at the top. Add a seasoning of salt and pepper, and fill the dish with milk. Lay a fairly-thick suet crust over all, and bake for about an hour and a half.

The lady who first gave me this recipe, and who is herself an excellent cook, told me that her servants liked this pie as much as they liked sirloin of beef.

I must say that I found difficulty in believing this statement, but, nevertheless, potato pie thus made is a very appetising dish.

Giblet pie with apples is an old-fashioned but inexpensive and savory dish. Giblets may frequently be bought at the poultryman's for ten or twelve cents.

To make it, throw the head away and wash the giblets several times in lukewarm water. Take the gall from the liver, skin the gizzard and neck, and divide each into three pieces.

There is a sort of pipe leading from one side of the gizzard to the other, and this must be cut from end to end. Put the legs and claws into boiling water to loosen the skin, and draw this off entirely and divide the heart and liver into halves. Put the giblets into a saucepan with cold water to cover them; let the water boil, then throw it away. Pour on fresh cold water, add two onions minced, and a sprinkling of pepper, and stew gently for about an hour and a half till the meat is tender.

It is an advantage to stew the gizzard and feet a little longer than the other giblets. Add salt to taste and leave the giblets in the liquor all night. Then next prepare apples as for a pie, and fill the dish with alternate layers of giblets and apples, pouring gravy over all. Cover the pie with pastry in the usual way, and bake slowly for about an hour and a half. This pie may be served hot for the dinner or cold for breakfast.

NOT TOUGH ENOUGH OR TOO TENDER.—It is said that the captain of an ocean steamer recently served out some of the cabin roast beef to the crew. A man was sent in remonstrance to the captain, who, tasting the meat and finding it all right, demanded the reason of the complaint. "Well, sir," said the spokesman as he shifted his quid, "we don't like it; there ain't no chaw in it."

Correspondence.

C. F. G.—Just at present we have no need of anything of the kind.

JOE F.—They are a matter of temperament. Nothing will effect a radical change in your wife but age.

G. S.—Surely you can judge whether she cares for you or no. There are a thousand and one little signs which should tell you this.

GRACE.—Write to "Lippincott & Co., Publishers, Phila., Pa.," for the book you want. It will cost you not more than one dollar or one and a half.

TIP.—For deafness, the result of scarlet fever, which has lasted over a period of forty years, we fear there will be no cure. But you had better consult some physician who makes diseases of the ear his especial study.

Q. Z.—We may some time in the near future give some hints as to judging of character by the ears. Generally speaking large ones are supposed to indicate good nature, and lack of over-brilliant qualities, while small ones are the reverse.

STING.—You will find a raw onion a simple remedy for a wasps sting. Place the juice or pulp on the affected spot: or chew a raw slice and swallow it slowly, if the inside of the throat be stung. Common blue, used by laundresses, is also an old and well-tried specific.

INQUIRER.—The letters I.H.S. are the Greek characters for I.E.S., and form the commencement of the Greek name of our Lord. The letters are often read as the initials of Jesus Hominum Salvator—Jesus, the Saviour of men—and this interpretation is said to have originated with St. Bernardine in A.D. 443.

H. F.—The Monts de Piete, corresponding to the pawnbrokers' shops here, are in France conducted by the State, and they form a part of the large administration of the Assistance Publique, contributing to that institution a considerable portion of the funds, which are distributed annually among the poor.

G. W. R.—"George Eliot" was the literary pseudonym adopted by Marian Evans, the author of "Adam Bede," "The Mill on the Floss," "Silas Marner," "Felix Holt," and many other high-class novels, which have won for her the position of one of the greatest of English writers of fiction. She was married late in life to Mr. Cross, and died December 22nd, 1880.

C. T.—It means bad language. Billingsgate is said to have derived its name from Belinus Magnus, a British prince, the father of King Lud (400 B.C.); but Stow thinks from a former owner. It was the old port of London, and the customs were paid there under Ethelred II., 979. Billingsgate was made a perfectly free market in 1699. In 1849 the market was greatly improved.

JANET.—As a remedy for red hands, put oatmeal or bran in the water in which you wash them. You might also apply a little glycerine at night, rubbing it well in, and then wearing a loose pair of old kid gloves during the night. The gloves should have a slit or hole cut in the palms to prevent any stoppage of the circulation which might otherwise cause from the pressure.

C. H. PHILLIPS.—Unfortunately, only too many of the various walks of life appear to be overcrowded, and it is certain that in those which have heretofore been regarded as the most gentlemanly, this is especially so. Whilst we do not believe that any energetic young man with a good amount of ability, and who has kept himself honest and honorable, will fail to succeed, there are so many whose abilities are but small, or who have not the necessary push, and those present to us the great difficulty. Why not turn to some practical trade.

READER.—So far as the use of tobacco in any form by adult persons is concerned, though many great writers and thinkers use it, that is no proof of its being beneficial. They find it soothing and pleasant, consequently they like it. Sir Henry Thompson recommends that it be used in the form of cigarettes, but that, in order to prevent any injurious effects, a piece of cotton-wool be kept in the tube or holder, and be renewed as soon as half a dozen cigarettes have been smoked. The object of this is to prevent any dust or nicotine passing into the mouth, and the appearance of this wool when taken out would give full support to this recommendation. This eminent surgeon only smokes two, or at most four, cigarettes per day—one or two after lunch and one or two after dinner. But the best advice to those about to smoke is—don't begin.

B. L. J.—We certainly think you could hardly employ your leisure hours with greater advantage, both educationally and otherwise, than by spending at least a portion of the time in the study of one of the languages you mention. We have no hesitation in recommending you to study Latin first, especially as you already know something of it. This will help you afterwards to go on with the Greek. At the same time, do not neglect your other and more general reading. Forge for yourself a key that will open out new treasures and enjoyments in the literary field by all manner of means; but do not let its manufacture deprive you of those which are already open to you. We do not think you could expect to do much in the way of reading either a Greek or Latin author with enjoyment under a couple of years or so; but after acquiring the simple rudiments of the grammar, with which a few months' study should make you tolerably familiar, you might fairly proceed to a practical application of them.

MARY D.—The old proverb, "The course of true love never did run smooth," is often found to hold good, although there are many exceptions. You say that you love your affianced with all your heart, and that you feel sure he loves you, and yet that you are continually having little squabbles, resulting in coldness for a few days or sometimes a week or two. Now, no two people are so perfect that they can be together continually without some little difference arising; but from what you say we are inclined to think the squabbles and coldness must be caused by something more than occasional irritability or loss of temper. Have you been quite open with us? Is not jealousy at the bottom of your little differences? and is the fault on his side or on yours? Does he at times seem to pay too much attention to other young ladies of your acquaintance? or, on the other hand, are you yourself just a little bit of a flirt? It is this sort of thing which is the fruitful parent of lovers' quarrels, and often brings about a lasting rupture between two people who love each other well and truly, and who would have made a happy and devoted married couple.